METRO / A21
LRT operations shortened by next week

SATURDAY SPECIAL / G1
Admirers eagerly await La Aunor's return

PROPERTY / B2-1
A mid-income buyer's guide to buying a condo

2BU / C1
How to look taller and more svelte

'I'm a victim, not a monster,' says land firm founder

By Doris C. Dumlao

FROM a "model" low-cost housing developer to a "monster."

This is how Delfin Lee, the founder and president of beleaguered property developer Globe Asiatique Realty Holdings Corp., ruefully described his ordeal as a result of the media storm over the Pag-Ibig, or the Home Development Mutual Fund, housing loan issue.

But even though he has yet to go through the wringer of a congressional

FULL FICTION A15

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Saturday, September 11, 2010 ★★ 11 sections / Vol. 23 / No. 275 P18

Emerald's 'siopao' only gainer in hostage crisis

By DJ Yap

EMERALD GARDEN Restaurant has never found the need to advertise its authentic Chinese offerings, including, what is arguably,

EMERALD'S A17

Elite AFP, PNP units give Aquino a show

By Norman Bordadora, Tina Santos and Rem Zamora

THREE HUGE explosions shook the white-and-blue bus parked under a tree, ripping off its door and shattering two of its windows.

BLITZ A17

P-Noy: Let us not jump to conclusions

By Norman Bordadora, Nikko Dizon and Marlen Ramos

PRESIDENT AQUINO yesterday warned against making hasty conclusions that "friendly fire" may have killed some of the Hong Kong tourists during the Rizal Park hostage saga.

Mr. Aquino's call for caution coincided with an appeal by Justice Secretary Leila de Lima to the media to be more responsible in their reports about the inquiry being conducted by a fact-finding panel she chairs.

"Let us not jump to conclusions, they promised the report by Wednesday. Let's wait for the report," the President told reporters.

He said questions remained on the accuracy of a theory that firing from police commandos trying to rescue Hong Kong tourists held hostage by dismissed Senior Insp. Rolando Mendoza might have hit some of the hostages.

"There are still questions. The way I understood it ... we have to identify the fragments to determine from which rifle they came from. I'm not sure if you can identify a firearm from fragments," Mr. Aquino said.

P-NOY A17

Peso bond sale nets $1B

Sue me, Cunanan dares Drilon

By Christine V. Esguerra

RETIRED Lt. Gen. Thelma Cunanan, the former Social Security System chair who has figured prominently in the congressional investigation into the allegedly excessive compensation packages in government-owned and -controlled corporations, yesterday dared the Senate finance committee to file charges against him.

"Sue us in court so that those people being vilified will have a fair chance to set the record straight," said Cunanan, speaking through his wife, retiree Belinda Olivares-Cunanan.

Olivares-Cunanan, who was interviewed by phone from China where her husband is undergoing treatment for prostate cancer,

SUE ME A15

PEACE, NOT WAR A Muslim child makes the peace sign during Eid'l Fitr, the end of the holy month of fasting and prayer known as Ramadan, at Rizal Park in Manila on Friday. Muslims all over the world celebrate Eid'l Fitr with prayers, family reunions and other festivities.

Landslide vote of confidence –Purisima

By Ronnel W. Domingo and Norman Bordadora

THE GOVERNMENT yesterday marked a milestone when it raised $1 billion, or P44.1 billion, from the sale of securities, pulling off the sale of the first peso-denominated bond outside the country.

It was also the first time an Asian country conducted a float using its own currency.

Usually, the government borrows from foreign commercial lenders in terms of US dollars, euros and yen.

The offering shows that, this time, the Philippine peso is now being accepted as an overseas bond, Finance Secretary Cesar V. Purisima said.

"Now, we can lessen the issuance of dollar bonds in the future," he said.

Purisima described yesterday's transaction as "a resounding success and a breakthrough achievement" of the Aquino administration.

"This is a landslide vote of confidence by the global financial markets in (President Aquino's) leadership ... as well

PESO A17

Pastor cancels Koran-burning amid int'l firestorm

GAINESVILLE, Florida—An anti-Islamic preacher backed off and then threatened to reconsider burning the Koran on the anniversary of the 9/11 attacks, angrily accusing a Muslim leader of lying to him on Thursday with a promise to move an Islamic center and mosque away from New York's Ground Zero. The issues planning the center denied there was ever such a deal.

The Rev. Terry Jones generated an international firestorm with his plan to burn the Koran on Saturday, the ninth anniversary of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, and he has been under intense pressure to give it up. President Barack Obama urged him to listen to "those better angels" and give up his "stunt," saying it would endan-

PASTOR A15

In a wired world, the crises come instantly

NEW YORK—"Advances in science, and divergent the ignorance," one book counsels. Advisas the other, "Be gentle towards all, ... forbearing."

If only the writers of the Koran and the Bible had logged on to Twitter accounts.

The world has always had its crumbs and crackpots, its messianics and religious bigots. But only in this wired generation has word of outrages against others' beliefs flashed around the globe in an instant, to create instant crises.

With his threat to burn Korans on the anniversary of the 9/11 terrorist attacks—a plan suddenly canceled on Thursday—Florida's most famous obscure preacher managed to draw imams and the Pope, televangelists and presidents, US governors and US generals, even Angelina Jolie into an

IN A WIRED A15

Hope for peace aired on Muslim feast day

BREAKFAST AT THE PARK A Muslim couple share breakfast after praying at Rizal Park in Manila on Friday to celebrate the end of the fasting month of Ramadan.

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

ON THE IMPORTANT Muslim feast day of Eid'l Fitr, Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin said he would be "turning the very first" to bring to a peaceful end the secessionist rebellion in Mindanao.

The 66-year-old former Army general and ambassador said he personally wants to see an end to the three decades-old conflict with Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) rebels.

"In [my] nearly 50 years in government service, I've spent a significant number of years in the company of our brothers and sisters in Islam. I also got to nurture their friendship and experience their hospitality," Gazmin said in a statement yesterday as Muslims celebrated

HOPE A11

WEATHER FORECAST

Second FRONTPAGE

LOTTO 6/42 6pm
20 14 3 26 19 27
6/49 LOTTO
9 9 1 4 7 0
4D LOTTO
4 2 1 6 3 2 4
HEADLOTTO 6/45
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LOTTO 3/D Tues 9PM LOTTO, result in 4445. P1.50 where

Dams still low on water

By Kristine L. Alave and Johanna Pharaon, Inquirer Northern Luzon

USUALLY AT this time of the year, major dams in Luzon have sufficient water to supply Metro Manila and the rest of the region.

But this year, water levels in dams are still below normal due to lack of rainfall, according to the weather bureau.

Dr. Antonio Nightingale, chief of the Pedo's meteorology division of the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa), said of the four major reservoirs, only Magat dam had normal water levels.

"The dams in San Roque, Angat, and Pantabangan were 'below normal' by 20-12 meters," Angat Dam, in Bulacan, had ceased supplying water for irrigation to Bulacan and Pampanga because of the water deficit.

"This is quite alarming. During this time of year, usually the water level is normal," Pajimutan said.

While there was still no need to cut off irrigation water from the other dams, Pajimutan said the Inquirer that incoming typhoons would take water levels before the second cropping season in October.

He noted that the southwest monsoon and the tropical cyclones that passed the country did not bring enough rainfall to raise water levels in dams.

Not enough rains

"We've not getting enough rains so there is a deficit," Pajimutan said. She reminded the government's reminder to the public to conserve water.

The country is just coming out of an extended dry season that wreaked havoc on the water supply and agriculture output.

Although the country is in the middle of La Niña, a weather phenomenon that provides more rains, there are not enough rainwater in the dams, according to Pagasa.

As of yesterday, there were eight tropical cyclones that have entered the country since January. Last year, there were 11 tropical cyclones during the January-September period, the weather bureau said.

Meanwhile, there's good news for the farmers of Isla Manuel, Pangasinan. The drought-ridden San Roque Dam has begun its recovery as its water levels hit its highest point this week since it started dipping in February.

The dam's reservoir elevation recorded for Thursday was 252.4 meter above sea level (masl), an improvement from one of its all-time low water levels of 228 masl which was recorded in July, said Tess Antiola, vice president for corporate social responsibility of the San Roque Power Corp. (SRPC).

Antiola said the current level was still lower than the ideal 262.00 masl for September, but it was enough to supply the needs of 22,000 hectares of farmlands in Pangasinan.

SLAMMING' Not enough water in Angat Dam

Irrigation first

In contrast to conditions in July when the San Roque Dam almost reached the critical level of 220.5 masl, where its power-generating facility would have automatically shut down, the dam is back to working order, releasing water during its peak hours of 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. daily to supply 50 megawatts to the Luzon grid.

"When there is more water in the dam, more water will be released to produce electricity," said Valdez. This water will then be passed on to irrigation canals across the province.

He said the first priority of the dam was to supply water for irrigation, not power generation.

"Because should consider the changing climate when doing their planning," Valdez said. "Extreme since 2003 shows that more rainfall comes later in the year."

Typhoon-damaged schools await rehab

By Tarra Quismundo

ALMOST A YEAR since back-to-back Typhoons "Ondoy" and "Pepeng" wreaked havoc across the country, damaged schools still await reconstruction and repair, worth roughly P2 billion, documents from the Department of Education's (DepEd) engineering office showed.

The DepEd Physical Facilities and School Engineering Division (PFSED) needs some P927 million more to fund reconstruction and rehabilitation work on 2,441 elementary and high schools that suffered damage when the consecutive typhoons ripped through the country.

PFSED placed the cost of damage at P2 billion last year, underscoring the destruction ranging from partial off roofing to collapsed walls.

"Since last year, more than P1 billion has been spent on repairs. We had assessed the damages at P2 billion and we're validating how much repairs are still needed. Ithink there's only one thing left (of the work) that remains to be done," DepEd chief engineering and PFSED head Oliver Hernandez told the Inquirer.

Typhoon Ondoy submerged much of Metro Manila in September last year with a casualty's worth of rain in a few hours, causing unprecedented flooding in the metropolis. Less than a month later, Typhoon Pepeng inundated Pangasinan province and parts of Northern Luzon.

DepEd's damage list placed the heaviest road repairment in the Ilocos region, with some P405 million to repair 438 pending, mostly in Pangasinan, followed in Southern Tagalog are second on the list awaiting some P265 million in funds, followed by Central Luzon which is looking to a P230 million repair budget.

Drenching repairs in Metro Manila are estimated to cost some P121 million while rehabilitation work in the Cordillera Administrative Region may amount to P139.97.5 million.

Retiring Verzosa bids PNP troops goodbye

By Alexis Romero

LEGAZPI (from my inclusive assignment)

This was the message of Philippine National Police (PNP) Chief Director General Jesus Verzosa to the troops of the elite Special Action Force (SAF) yesterday.

Verzosa was at the SAF headquarters in Bicutan, Taguig, to say goodbye to the troops. The PNP chief is scheduled to retire on Sept. 14.

In an extemporaneous address, Verzosa recalled that on his first day in the service in 1978, his unit was flown from Manila to Maguindanao. He said they were not allowed to land at Awang airport because of a firefight between government troops and rebels at that time.

"I don't know if that was an indication of a turbulent career that I would be treading for the next 28 years," Verzosa reasoned.

VERZOSA

Freezer four times

Through his career, Verzosa said he was promoted meritoriously but was also "placed in the freezer" four times, meaning he was "thrown in some assignments that I did not want."

"But you, I would like you to look at the ups and downs of your career because, especially the officers, there are ups and downs (for) all of us. But this is our career. This is our destiny in the service. We do not control what will be our future assignments. But the important thing is do to for us to proficient, to learn, to develop ourselves, to develop our units," he said.

A graduate of the Philippine Military Academy Class of 1978, Verzosa is retiring just after the Aug. 23 Quirino Grandstand hostage where a disgruntled police officer held a busload of tourists from Hong Kong hostage. The incident left nine dead, including the hostage taker Former Chief Insp. Rolando Mendoza.

Fact-finding probe

A fact-finding probe is now being held jointly by the Department of Justice and Senate and Congressional to probe police lapses in the incident, which is criticized live by local TV networks and beamed around the world.

Verzosa also told the SAF troops to accept the decision to use the Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) unit of the Manila Police District (MPD) instead of the better-equipped SAF in the morning of the incident.

"We are there, but the decision of the ground commander was the one to be followed. We were there, but the decision of the ground commander was to utilize the SWAT instead the MPD. That is the decision of the ground commander. We have to respect him."

In a televised press conference Thursday, President Aquino said he would have preferred to use the SAF in the Aug. 23 incident.

Points of improvement

Verzosa also explained to the SAF that the national police leadership is cooperating with the investigators "not only to look at the lapses that were committed but also to look at points of improvement and development so that we can prevent such things to happen in the future."

In the 1990s, Verzosa was Criminal Investigation Detection Group (CIDG) regional director for Southern Tagalog when he led an investigation that pointed to Calauan town Mayor Antonio Sanchez as the main suspect in the killing of University of the Philippine-Los Baños student Aurin Allan Gomez and Mary Eileen Sarmenta.

Sanchez was later convicted of the murders and is now serving a life sentence.

Later as CIDG Chief, Verzosa also led the investigation of the November 2000 Nida Blanca murder.

In 2003, when Verzosa was PNP intelligence chief, Jemaah Islamiyah bomber Fathur Rohman al-Ghozi escaped from his jail cell to Camp Crame. Verzosa resigned from his post to give way to a probe into the escape. Al-Ghozi was killed in an encounter with government forces in General Mindanao later that year.

'Euro Generals' scandal

Verzosa was appointed PNP chief in September 2008. Shortly after his appointment, the "Euro Generals" scandal broke.

Also involving an Interpol conference, then PNP Comptroller Police Director Eliseo dela Paz was arrested at the Manila airport for carrying 315,000 euros or P6.9 million in undeclared cash.

Verzosa's wife Cynthia was with the party and has been charged by the Ombudsman, along with two other civilians and other PNP officers.

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Group seeks P90-B budget for health care

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By Jocelyn R. Uy

A GROUP of medical practitioners, finding the P92 billion proposed national budget for health too small, has put forward an alternative P90-billion spending plan for the Department of Health (DOH).

The Health Alliance for Democracy (Head) said its alternative budget proposal would respond better to the persistent woes of the DOH and the intervening multi-trader of inhouse clusters in the country.

"The alternative health budget highlights the same major areas of concern: lack of healthcare services, loss of health personnel and the need to focus on preventive and low-cost interventions," the group said.

The group is eyeing the P88 billion increased allotment for debt payments in the 2011 budget as the "key source" for its alternative budget.

According to the Head breakdown of its proposed P90-billion budget, at least P40 billion would be earmarked for the improvement of the public health-care delivery system and the services of state hospitals.

The money will let 12 DOH-run hospitals would each get P3 billion and that all 55 public hospitals across the country must be provided with P500 million by the government.

Not a priority

"Judging from the proposed 2011 national government budget for health, the Department administration does not believe that improving healthcare is a priority," the group said in a statement.

In the proposed budget that President Aquino has submitted to Congress, the budget for health increased by 12.6 percent, from this year's P101.3 billion to P93.3 billion in 2011.

In Mr. Aquino's budget proposal, the DOH ranked 7th among the departments that are to get the highest allocations, next to the Department of Social Welfare and Development.

Five percent of GNP

But Head noted that a "far cry" from the World Health Organization's recommendation that the health budget must be five percent of the gross national product (GNP), or around P480 billion, said Head secretary general Dr. Gustavo Sioson.

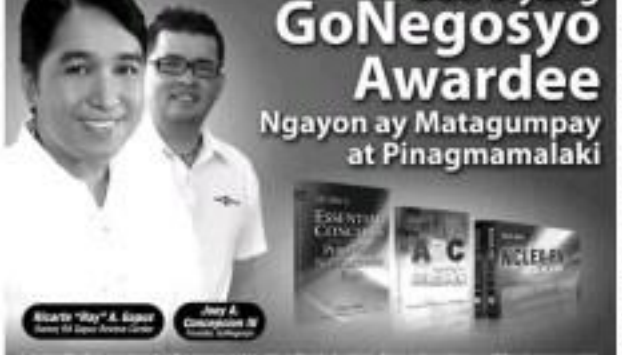
In its alternative budget proposal, Head allotted P25 billion for health human resource maintenance and development, which it said will see the full implementation of the Rizal Act of 2002, the so-called magna carta of public health workers.

P7 billion for salaries

The group also proposed that at least P7 billion be earmarked for the increase in salaries of duty doctors, nurses and other health personnel.

It also proposed that P15.84 billion be allocated for preventive and public health programs and health promotion - P5 billion for infectious diseases, including tuberculosis, dengue, malaria and HIV/AIDS; another P5 billion for the implementation of the national drug policy; and P5 billion for reproductive health and safe motherhood.

The alternative budget proposal also tackles chronic health conditions such as high maternal mortality, prevention and management of infectious diseases and high out of pocket costs, it added.



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Church seeks donations for Pakistan flood victims

By Jocelyn R. Uy

RADIO SOUL cries each time you give a kiss on Sunday.

The Archdiocese of Manila yesterday announced that it was making a second collection during Masses tomorrow to raise additional funds for the 28 million flood-stricken residents of Pakistan.

Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Cardinal Rosales yesterday appealed to the faithful to be extra generous in extending help to victims of the massive floods that submerged a wide swathe of the Islamic country since last month.

"We will have a second collection during Masses on Sunday so we can help these people," said Rosales over the Cherubican Radio Station yesterday.

In encouraging the public to be charitable, Rosales said the situation in Pakistan was six times worse than the Philippines had experienced when Tropical Storm "Ondoy" poured epic rains that submerged many villages in Metro Manila and neighboring provinces in September last year.

"God has given us compassion. Let us show our faith in Him by helping them, to provide additional help to Pakistan," said the archbishop.

Early last week, Asia Bibi of Cureve, Pakistan appealed for help from the Philippines over Radio Veritas, saying that help was needed in the form of cash since each province in the country has various "considerations."

Gilbad also said that the situation is escalating, calling it as "getting worse" as many roads and bridges needed to transport foodwaters have not yet subsided.

Torrential monsoon rains that began in July have submerged 1/5 of Pakistan's flood—the worst in 80 years—washing away an area of Spain, covering 160 percent of the nation's total farming land and killing at least 1,600 people.

The United Nations said roughly 20 million people need relief immediate assistance in the aftermath of the flooding.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Saturday, September 11, 2010
Ordinary Time

1st Reading: 1 Cor 10:14-22
Gospel: Lk 6:43-49

Jesus said to the crowd, "No healthy tree bears bad fruit, nor does a diseased tree bear good fruit. And each tree is known by its fruit. (You don't) pick figs from thorns, or grapes from brambles. Similarly the good person (brings) out good things from the good stored in his heart, and an evil person draws out evil things from the evil stored in his heart. For the mouth speaks from the fullness of the heart.

"Why do you call me 'Lord! Lord!' and not do what I say? I will show you what the one who comes to me and hears my words and puts them into practice is like. That one is like the builder who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. When the river overflowed and the torrent battered against the house, it could not budge it, because it had been well built.

But the one who hears but does not act is like a man who built his house on the ground without a foundation. The flood burst against it, and it fell at once. How great was its collapse!"

COMMENTARY

"A healthy tree does not bear bad fruit, nor does a poor tree bear good fruit."

Do you consider yourself a good person?

Is there room for improvement?

Is it enough to be a good person?

Is it enough to be a good person and to do a lot of good things?

Is it enough to be a good person and to do a lot of good things and to be a good person?

Is it enough to be a good person and to do a lot of good things and to be a good person and to be a good person?

Is it enough to be a good person and to do a lot of good things and to be a good person and to be a good person and to be a good person?

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LGUs not collecting enough taxes–COA

By Leila B. Salaverria

LOCAL GOVERNMENT units (LGUs) were not earning as much as they should because they were not aggressive in collecting taxes and imposing the proper fees, according to the Commission on Audit (COA).

The COA also said many LGUs depended mostly on their internal revenue allotments or their share of taxes from the national government, in meeting their needs.

This prompted the COA to recommend the formulation of a comprehensive revenue plan that would identify effective strategies for collecting fees and taxes, provide for rates and constant imposition of approved rates and even a list of delinquent taxpayers to enable lands.

"It is quite disturbing that a great number of LGUs are yet to explore their potential revenue sources 16 years after the implementation of RA 7160 (the Local Government Code)," the COA said.

Self-reliance

The Local Government Code which took effect in 1991 specifies the powers and responsibilities of LGUs and intends to make them self-reliant communities.

The COA screened 19 LGUs—Manila, Quezon, Makati, Caloocan, Pasig, Marikina, San Juan, Pasay, Antipolo, Puerto Princesa, Iloilo City, Iloilo province, Davao, Pampanga, Bataan, Rizal, Mid-west and Davao del Norte.

In its audit conducted from February 2009 to January 2010, the COA looked into the fees and taxes these LGUs imposed from 2004 to 2008.

In its report, the audit agency said the shortfall in collections was due to the LGUs' failure to fully exercise their taxing powers.

It said the LGUs did not properly compute real property taxes, as they were unable to revise the schedule of fair market values of real property units every three years as required by law.

Old rates

Four LGUs undercollected by as much as P162.76 million because their assessors, business permits and license offices imposed old rates despite the enactment of new laws.

The COA also said 14 LGUs failed to impose and collect ad valorem tax on idle lands and did not issue warrants of levies or auctioned real property units with tax delinquencies.

All 19 LGUs were also delisted when it came to assessing tax obligations. Furthermore, they granted P22.96 million in discounts or fines on real property taxes at rates of amounts to taxpayers without corresponding ordinances.

Several LGUs also did not comply with their directives in instances that were unfavorable to operating without permits and licenses, notifying violators or collect corresponding taxes.

Others had inadequate monitoring of quarrying activities, and collection of fees was not maximized.

The COA also said other LGUs imposed excessive tax rates, while others imposed taxes inconsistently.

Wrong computation

Pasay City, in particular, was found to be losing P74.032 million yearly because of undercollection of taxes arising from the use of the wrong method of determining the market value of commercial lots.

"These deficiencies may have been due to lax enforcement and/or apparent disregard of existing rules and regulations, inadequate monitoring of performance of concerned offices, lack of coordination between and among offices, and failure to maintain accurate records," the COA said.

GMA bill seeks to get tough on drunk driving

By Michael Lim Ubac

FORMER PRESIDENT Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo now wants her successor to get tough on drunk drivers.

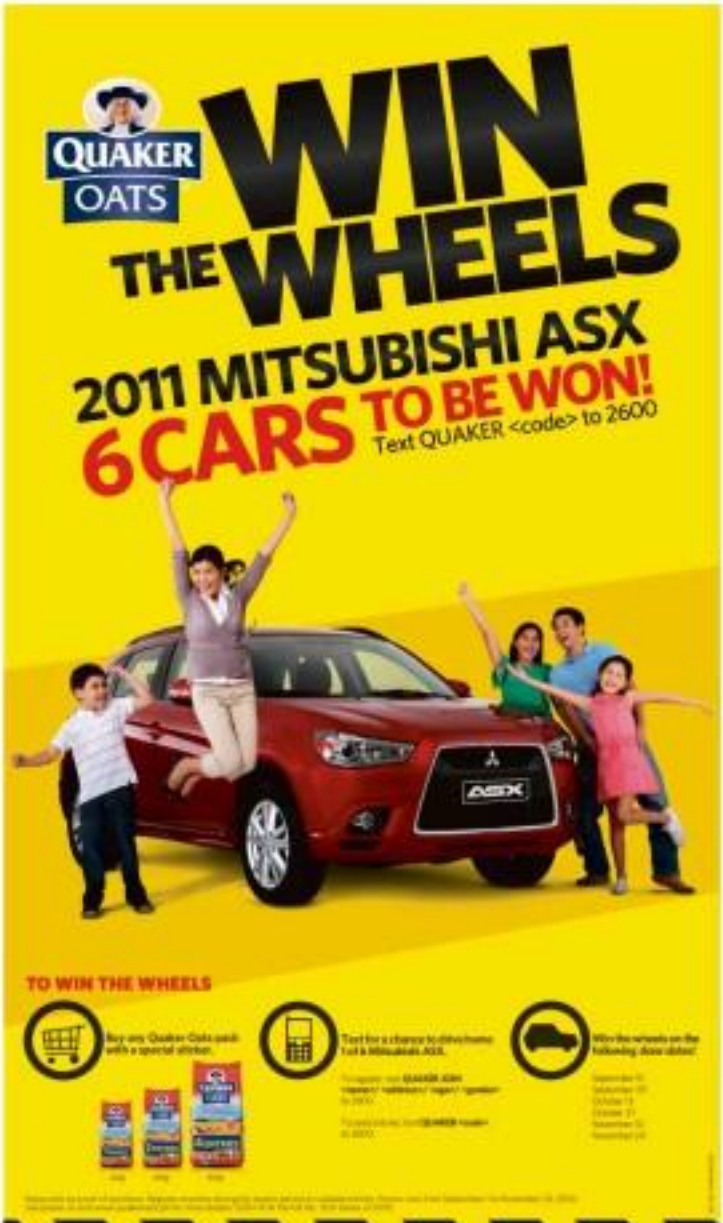
Arroyo, representative of the second district of Pampanga, has refiled a bill easily making drivers' penalties on DUI and/or DWI offenders, which stand for driving under the influence of alcohol and driving while intoxicated, respectively.

Hit or DWI is considered a crime in every state in the United States, and most, if not all, 16 states have a legal limit of .08 percent in the person's blood alcohol concentration (units of milligrams per deciliter, representing 8 g of alcohol in 10 liters of blood).

In the Philippines, although there are also drunk driving ordinances in most cities, there is lax enforcement among authorities.

Thus, House Bill No. 382, re-authored by Mr Arroyo and her son Rep. Dinoduke M. Arroyo, representative of the second district of Camarines Sur, seeks to declare driving while under the influence of alcohol or liquor a criminal act.

HB 382 is actually a refiled bill since it was passed by the House of Representatives in the previous Congress. However, the bill was effectively killed due to inaction on the part of the Senate leadership.



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A Specialty Division of the Philippine Medical Association

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MISSION: To promote the highest quality surgical care
CORE VALUES: Social Responsibility, Quality, Teamwork, Integrity
BREAKTHROUGH OBJECTIVES: Social Accountability and Responsibility

75 YEARS

Greetings

The Philippine College of Surgeons was founded on September 12, 1936 by a group of visionary surgeons led by the late Dr. Gregorio T. Singian. Since then the practice of surgery in our country has progressively evolved into a globally recognized specialty. This year will gratefully usher in the 75th year of our organization's meaningful existence. To appreciate the College's illustrious accomplishments in the process, we plan to celebrate our Diamond Jubilee for a whole year. The kick-off celebration will be on September 12, 2010 while the grand culminative celebration will be on September 12, 2011. The committee has lined up various community-relevant activities like surgical missions and surgical health fair fora to be conducted by all of the chapters to highlight the government's and social responsibilities of the Fellows.

In order to know and value the great achievements that our predecessors have done is to explore the foundation of the College. I would like to enjoin everyone to actively participate in the celebration of this monumental event.

God Bless,

CEFERINO SUÑEZ ADUAN, M.D., FPCS
President

celebrates its

Diamond Year

SEPTEMBER 12, 2010 - SEPTEMBER 12, 2011

"Continuing the Culture of Surgical Excellence"

The 75th Jubilee Logo highlights the torch which symbolizes the undying passion of culture and a shared attitude towards excellence. The 3 stars represent Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao. The diamonds symbolize the 11 regional chapters, namely: Northern Luzon, Cordillera, Central Luzon, Metro Manila, Southern Tagalog, Bicol, Cebu-Eastern Visayas, Negros Occidental, Panay, Northern Mindanao and Davao-Southern Mindanao Chapters.

It is with great pleasure that I invite you to join us in the celebration of the 75th founding anniversary of the Philippine College of Surgeons in September 12, 2011.

The celebration will commence on September 12, 2010 with a yearlong series of activities in all parts of the country culminating in 2011. Activities include among others, medical and surgical missions, fund-raising projects, tree planting, radio and television interviews and talks, all of which are geared to inform the public about the Philippine College of Surgeons.

In its 75 years of existence, the Philippine College of Surgeons has grown to heights and bounds. With a membership of more than 2,000 Fellows, the PCS has provided competent surgeons in all parts of the Philippines. It has unceasingly promoted excellence, competence, and compassion among its members in the care of patients.

In its 75 years of existence, the Philippine College of Surgeons has served as the mother organization of more than ten surgical societies and in so doing, the PCS has built a strong and lasting relationship with these organizations. It regularly holds meetings and consultations with the officers of the surgical societies to discuss issues that affect them in the delivery care of surgical patients.

My colleagues and friends, to make the 75 years founding anniversary truly memorable and successful, let us actively participate in all the activities in the months to come leading to September 12, 2011.

Best wishes to all and may God bless the Philippine College of Surgeons!

ALEX A. SPARED, M.D., FPCS
Overall Chairman
PCS Jubilee Celebration

September 12, 1936 marked the creation of the Philippine College of Surgeons by a group of 15 forward thinking surgeons led by the late Gregorio T. Singian. Founded on Constitution and By-laws was formed and ratified on October 10, 1936. Dr. Gregorio T. Singian was elected its first President of the PCS. He is also credited as the Father of Philippine Surgery.

74th PCS FOUNDATION DAY
NATIONWIDE ACTIVITIES

- **September 5, 2010 (Sunday)**
  Minor Surgical Mission, PCS Klinika ng Bayan, Kamarin, Caloocan
- **September 6, 2010 (Monday)**
  8th PCS Foundation Cup, Sun Valley Golf Club
- **September 8, 2010 (Wednesday)**
  Nationwide Blood-Letting Activities

  The following hospitals in Metro Manila wherein Blood-letting will be simultaneously held are: Chinese General Hospital and Medical Center; East Avenue Medical Center; FEU-NRMF Hospital; Jose R. Reyes Memorial Medical Center; Makati Medical Center; MCU-FDTMF Hospital; Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital; Quezon City General Hospital; Rizal Medical Center; Sto. Tomas University Hospital; St. Luke's Medical Center; The Medical City; UP-PGH and Veterans Memorial Medical Center
- **September 8, 2010 (Wednesday)**
  Medical and Surgical Mission with Lay Fora, PMA Auditorium
- **September 10, 2010 (Friday)**
  Dinner, UNILAB Bayanihan Center, Mandaluyong City

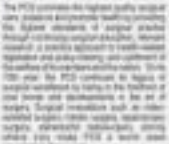
The PCS does its share in nation building. Programs include yearly surgeons to the outlying provinces or regions of the country to conduct free surgical missions, blood-letting activities, medical and surgical campaigns and symposia, and PCS-accredited training programs.

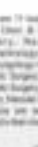
The PCS Foundation provides the resources to assist the PCS fellows in goal in advancing the art and science of surgery. It supports the training of surgeons in the underserved areas. The Foundation also finances the outreach medical activities organized by PCS.

The title "Father of the Philippine College of Surgeons" is an honor bestowed upon a surgeon who has undergone training in surgery, has practiced surgery, has established a pattern of surgical mastery by training and teaching present leaders. Likewise, moral and ethical practices are examined to the acceptance of the PCS.

The PCS commits to social responsibilities in keeping the underprivileged sectors of society through its Klinika ng Bayan, Operation Smile, Operation Lakbay Pagasa, Operation Hapasan, Operation Sagip Puso, Operation Tuli, Operation Kalinga, Operation Kalusugan, PCS Foundation Cup, Blood-letting activities, Medical Missions, Tree Planting, Radio and Television Interviews and Talks, and other activities.

The PCS promotes the highest quality surgical care, advances and promotes teaching, promotes the future standards of surgical practice through continuing education, encourages research, promotes approach to health-related legislation and policy-making, and upholds all of the qualities of humanism and ethics within. On the 75th year the PCS continues its legacy of surgical excellence by being in the forefront of new trends and developments in the art of surgery. Surgical specialties in the College include surgery, cardiac surgery, neurosurgery, pediatric surgery, plastic surgery, reconstructive surgery, endocrine surgery, colon and rectal surgery, thoracic surgery, vascular surgery, transplant surgery, abdominal surgery, among others. Currently, there are 11 recognized surgical specialties.





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Electrification figures may have been fudged

By Michael Lim Ubac

THE ENERGY CHIEF has himself admitted that he was in the dark about the actual extent of the government's electrification program.

Energy Secretary Jose Reno Almonthe on Thursday initially claimed at a budget hearing conducted by the house committee on appropriations that almost 100 percent of all barangays nationwide had already been energized.

The apparently sweeping statement raised the eyebrows of some lawmakers, including former Eastern Samar Gov. and now Rep. Ben Evardone.

When asked by Evardone about the validity of his presentation during the hearing, Almonte admitted to the committee that he was misled about presenting the report because he, too, also doubted its accuracy.

Doubtful accuracy

Almonte then vowed to look into the matter.

Heeding the assurances, officials of the Department of Energy (DOE) led by Almonte claimed that as of November 2009, electrification of the country had already reached 99.29 percent with 41,722 of the total 41,980 barangays already having access to electricity.

As of July 31, all the 11,492 barangays in the Visayas had already been energized, 95.03 percent in Luzon and 95.86 percent in Mindanao. This means that only 94 barangays nationwide had not been energized.

The DOE also reported that all barangays in the Cordillera Administrative Region, Regions 1, 2, the National Capital Region (I, 7, 9, 11 and 12 were 100 percent energized.

Other regions had 99 percent success in electrification it added: Region 3 (99.99 percent); Region 4A (99.03 percent); Region 4B (99.32 percent); Region 5 (99.09 percent; Region 6 (99.91 percent); Region 10 (99.75 percent); Muslim Mindanao Region 99.23 percent; and CARAGA (99.92 percent).

Totally incorrect

It needed Evardone exclaimed that the DOE report was "totally incorrect."

"I know for a fact that in Eastern Samar alone only about 60 percent of the 169 barangays have electricity," he said. He suggested that Almonte who was at the time of "brain dead."

"Whoever made this report should be fired for feeding the DOE Secretary Almonte an erroneous, divisive and misleading information," Evardone said.

He added, "Obviously, Mr. Secretary this report was either meant to deceive you and Congress or a 'sinister-cleansing' scheme which is definitely far from the truth."

Evardone said that the misleading report could have been the main reason that the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) disapproved the P2 billion request of the National Electrification Administration for rural electrification projects.

'Far from reality'

Evardone and Cagayan de Oro Rep. Rufus Rodriguez vowed to ask the DBM to reconsider its decision, saying rural electrification was a critical component of development.

"It is very clear that these statistics are far from reality," Evardone said.

He also unveiled the DOE plan to put up solar power panels in far-flung barangays, which could energize only four electric bulbs in the place, or town center and barangay roads.

"Once DOE had installed the solar panels, they considered the barangay as already energized which should not be the case because a barangay can only be considered energized if its households have electricity," he said.

Noynoy orders DOLE to solve PAL labor row

By Norman Bordadora

PRESIDENT AQUINO has ordered the Departments of Labor and Employment (DOLE) and of Transportation and Communication to ensure a settlement of the dispute between the management and workers of the flag carrier Philippine Airlines (PAL).

"I appeal to both sides, both labor and management, to go to the bargaining table with the end in view of finally achieving that agreement," President Aquino said.

Mr. Aquino warned that routes that PAL might fail to cover as a result of the labor dispute could be given to other airlines.

This developed after the union of PAL stewards filed a notice of strike before the Department of Labor and Employment.

"At this point there is no expectation that services will be interrupted," Mr. Aquino told reporters in an interview in a **Philippine Navy base in Cavite.**

"But over-all our expectation ... there has been a notice by the [Civil Aviation and Aeronautic Board] to other airlines of potential destinations they will be given to replace the slots that PAL will not be servicing if they go on strike," he added.

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Across the NATION

Hunt for Maguindanao suspects resumes

Mayoral bet for special Lanao Sur polls slain

ILIGAN CITY—Unidentified armed men ambushed and killed a mayoral candidate for the Nov. 8 special elections in Tagoloan, Lanao del Sur, early morning Friday.

Four others were seriously wounded, according to Col. Ariel Montes, commander of the Army's 44th Infantry Battalion.

Alimudin Guro Alim was on his way home, along with four escorts, after attending the 6:45 a.m. prayers in Marawi City when ambushed, Montes said.

His four escorts engaged the armed men in a fire fight but were seriously wounded.

Montes said the police were still investigating but there were suspicions the incident had something to do with a grudge that Alim was involved in but did not discuss publicly or in another venue.

Alim became the first casualty in the special elections scheduled for some of the 39 towns of Lanao del Sur, following the failure of polling there due to violence marred the May 10 vote.

Alim was seeking a fresh mandate in Tagoloan mayor in a nine-way race that pitted him against candidates belonging to two large political clans.

The Tagoloan balloting was marred by violence, prompting the Commission on Elections to declare failure of the polls in seven of its clustered precincts.

A May 10 memorandum by the Comelec from lawyer Jocilyn Bernardo, then serving Lanao del Sur election supervisor, cited four clustered precincts in three Tagoloan barangays where there was failure of balloting.

These consist of 1,215 voters that were thought to "affect the result of election."

Fresh voting

At that point, Alim was in second place behind rival Mangontar Balindong, who had a margin of more than 800 votes.

In a subsequent resolution, the Comelec en banc, Tr ser ancle the election results in Tagoloan and ordered a fresh town-wide balloting.

The Comelec said the new order effectively voided the earlier vote tallies garnered by all candidates for all positions at stake.

The same resolution also directed that the balloting "shall involve national and local elective positions."

Tagoloan has 10,870 registered voters in 24 clustered precincts.

Meanwhile, a man was killed while three others, including a 9-year-old boy, were hit by stray bullets when members fired guns into the air early Friday.

Boyet Abanderado, 35, and a resident of Barangay Salimbao, Initao Bukidnon, Magsaysaysan, was killed after a stray bullet hit his head at 6 a.m. Friday.

He was rushed by neighbors in the habal-habal but died while receiving any treatment.

A Grade 5 pupil of Barangay Salimbao, also in Initao Bukidnon, was injured in the ankle by another suspected bullet.

The other victims suffered minor injuries, the police said.

Richel Umel and Ryan Rosauro, with a report from Edwin Fernandez, Inquirer Mindanao

MEMBERS of the Muslim community attend the prayers at the football field in Davao City in celebration of Eid'l Fitr or the holy end Ramadan

Worker decries mishaps in Cavite steel factory

By Marizar Cinco
Inquirer Southern Luzon

ROSARIO, Cavite—Alan Inocencio, two-month stint at the factory left him with a fractured nose bridge, a swollen face, an stitches on his left arm and a fractured rib bone.

He said he would have wanted to return to work if the company had not fired him after the accident.

Inocencio, 20, was hired in May as a right shift production operator at Elin-CQS Steel Corp.

On July 9, he was stationed at the pour machine, where 20 to 30 kilos of steel are heated and compressed.

"The machine suddenly catapulted me and the metal pieces flew and hit me," he recalled.

Smashed face

Inocencio pointed out when a metal piece he described to be as large as a basin hit him on the face.

When he regained consciousness minutes later and cried for help from the dimly lit production area, he said no one came up and told him his face was smashed.

It took an hour before Inocencio, assisted by metal grinder Edmund Mendoza, was brought to the hospital that was only about ten minutes away.

He said the company did not have to pay.

Inocencio was confined for a few days until the company ordered that he be discharged.

"The doctor advised me to stay a little longer since my metal wires still pierces that I still could not even see with my left eye. But the company said they would not pay for my hospital bills anymore," he said.

Inocencio, who finished high school in Zambonga del Norte, ended his short factories at the Cavite Economic Zone Authority (Ceza) here.

He lives with his wife and 3-year-old daughter in a makeshift room, with a bathroom they share with other tenants, and can hardly pay for the monthly rent of P1,400.

"I had worked for several companies in Ceza before. I had finished my contracts for as long as two years. It was just here that I met an accident," he said.

He had not fully recovered yet when the company called for him and offered him P5,500 for the CT scan and P6,000.

"I may not be good at English but I know I read it right. They wanted me to sign some documents that if I did, would mean they would not renew my contract and I would have nothing more to claim from them," he said.

Inocencio, who is backed by a daily wage of P195, refused the money and instead filed complaints for illegal dismissal and moral and actual damages at the Department of Labor and Jobs, at the National Labor Relations Commission.

> The workers are asked to wear safety shoes with metal toes, but these are only for the regular employees

"The company wanted me to settle down the case. They said they have their lawyer, while I could not get any. But if I withdraw it, what would happen to me next? It would be hard for me to find another job (because of the accident)," he said.

On Aug. 26, another worker, Robert Lebosnes, a line leader, was killed after the machine again cooked out.

"He was standing in front of the (steel) grinder. The metal scraps from the broken machine behind him flew and a piece, weighing about 20 kilograms, fell and pierced his skull. He was leaned over the grinder as his stomach was sliced," said Soriyo.

The Center Workers' Assistance Center (WAC), a non-governmental organization, said it had received reports of several accidents at Elin-CQS Steel Corp.

"Several accidents have already occurred. Some accidentally dropped loads of metal, leaving their cuts. Others were pinned under the machines," said WAC chair Windy Cuede.

Soriyo and Jun in Asis, one of his colleagues met an accident.

"The problem is the lack of safety gears. Although the company advises the wearing of protective gears, the management does not strictly enforce it," said Cuede.

Soriyo said the workers are asked to wear safety shoes with metal toes, but these are only for the regular employees, subcontractor only lasts four half of the work population. They were also asked to wear non-woven but they would buy them for P55.

No comment

"We are encouraging those who had accidents to speak out. Most of them are afraid to talk because the company might fire them," said Cuede.

Reached by phone on Thursday, human resources manager Lenalie Caudal, refused to comment on Lebosnes's case, but said the company was talking with the victim's family.

In the case of Soriyo, "That is already in the court. But I can assure you there's no truth to that," she said.

AMPATUAN, Maguindanao—As Muslims started the Eid celebrations that marked the end of the fasting month of Ramadan, soldiers moved out of their camps yesterday for Operation Alpha, the military's code for the manhunt for the remaining suspects in the Maguindanao massacre.

Brig. Gen. Ernesto Boiser, commander of the Army's 601st Infantry Brigade, said the soldiers inspected the celebration of Hadji Eng. Sakaib Ampatuan's camp whose troops were dispatched only after the 7 a.m. community prayers.

Operation Alpha was aimed at helping the police and the Department of Justice serve the warrants to suspects at large.

Residents said they were wary about being displaced again when soldier clash with three Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) rebels.

But Antalano said the military would avoid contact with MILF rebels.

"The military continues to observe, protect, preserve and secure the peace process. (The) 601st Brigade will not start any hostility against the MILF" he said.

Antalano said the operation was solely for the arrest of the remaining suspects.

"We are committed to help the PNP and the DOJ apprehend and serve the warrants of arrest to the suspects in the Ampatuan massacre," he said in a text message to reporters.

Antalano said he was optimistic the operation would not last longer than two weeks.

Antalano said he had conducted a dialogue with Shariff Ignak town officials to allay fears among civilians of evacuations.

He said during the Aug. 30 meeting, he assured local leaders that the main targets of a pursuit operation were mostly Ampatuan clan members or their close allies.

Among those being hunted down were Sakunales Ampatuan, the mayor of Mitimiturjan when the massacre happened, Cassar Ampatuan, former vice mayor of Datu Unduk town, former Vice Mayor Sukarno Saudi of Indian Ito Barangay, Maguindanao, Datu Ely Ampatuan, former vice mayor of Shariff Aguak and Ipe Ampatuan, a barangay chair.

Antalano said he also sought the cooperation of the suspects' relatives to persuade them to surrender. He said: "unnecessary bloodshed."

Relatives of the accused officials have denied their alleged involvement in the massacre. *Noah B. Macalma, Inquirer Mindanao*

Witness in Aug. 5 airport bombing recants statement

DAVAO CITY—One of the prosecution's key witnesses in the Aug. 5 airport bombing here has recanted his statement that implicated former Iloilo representative Mujib Ashtan and seven other former Iloilo officials.

A copy of the recantation statement that the bureau obtained said Elardo Sawadjaan said on Sept. 7 he was paid P200,000 to incriminate Ashtan.

Sawadjaan said he got the money from Subi Gow Abdurahim Tan after he signed a prepared affidavit linking Ashtan and former Iloilo town mayors Najib Mahilim and Ahmad Bunch.

The bureau repeatedly tried but failed to reach Tan.

Sawadjaan said he and the other witnesses, including most of his relatives, were brought to Tan's residence here after the filing of the affidavits on Sept. 1.

He said after taking heads to the living room of Tan's house, they were handed their money.

Sawadjaan said a certain Ibrahim, whom he described as a follower of Tan, accompanied him and the other witnesses in filing their affidavits that implicated Ashtan and the two other former Iloilo officials before Western Mindanao state prosecutor Florentio Cabanero on Sept. 1.

He said he decided to withdraw his statements because of a bothered conscience.

Another suspect in the Zamboanga airport bomb, Hadji Bindy Indanan, has submitted an affidavit denying he met with Ashtan, Bunak and Mahilim to plan the assassination of Tan.

Indanan was identified by a relative, who is among the prosecution witness in the airport blast.

The Davao City-based businessman said: "The statement ... is totally untrue ... I did not meet Hadji Mucknar Oraa, Abjak Salam, Muslimin Alih, Mr. Hadjirul and a certain Ashtan ... The allegation involving and conversations never took place," he said.

The police had said that Oraa, Ashtan, Alih, Hadjirul and Adang served as accomplices to the Tan slaying.

Meanwhile, military officials have expressed alarm over the worsening conflict between factions.

Task Force Zamboanga commander Col. Santiago Baliaxor admitted that they were worrying that the members would later be caught in the crossfire.

Tan, Mahilim, Ashtan and Bunch all maintain innocence. *Inquirer Mindanao*

INQUIRER Visayas

E-mail us at [illegible]
Website: [illegible]

Julius Jun Bandayrel
Bureau Chief Edralyn L. Benedicto

INSIDE the Balay (left), note the embossed metal ceiling from England and shipped to Cebu in the 19th century. The Balay na Tisa (top)

Carcar fights back for its historic houses

By Carlo Bagano
Correspondent

CARCAR, 40 kilometers south of Cebu City, is a living and bustling city that is known to have the largest number of heritage structures in Cebu province.

Its name is geared by charming edifices from different architectural periods. There, a Spanish colonial church; here, an American-Victorian dispensary (gingerbread, one night inside); and down again, a transition house that some crazed carver would confuse as Tsinlhay.

All reside inside the Carcar poblacion—pure newly planted this fiesta featuring the settling 97 fellas now—as they [illegible] 29 to say the celebration of National Heritage Month in Cebu.

Four of the 19th-century houses—the Balay ng Tisa, Ang Dahong Balay, the Mercado Mansion and the Silva House—received recognition and protection as national historical landmarks from the National Historical Commission of the Philippines (NHCP).

The houses were chosen for their significance in architecture and for the heroism of their owners, many of whom had battled it over the town's social, economic, political, cultural and religious life. They now go down in history as the first privately owned ancestral houses in southern Cebu recognized and protected by the NHCP, the former National Historical Institute.

The May 30 event appeared to be another triumph over a long chorus battle against rampant modern development.

The preservation of Carcar's historic houses is [illegible] its grassroots livelihood, for this matter) one only be awakened to the tenacity of its citizens, especially its traditional elite.

Most interesting a city in July 2007 in a referendum marked by a low turnout of voters, Carcar's heritage has been grossly threatened. The new city, however, seems to be fighting back in a subtle, elegant form.

Heritage town

Representatives of the traditional elite, which headed an evangelizement organization in 2002 as the Carcar Heritage Conservation Society (CHCS), had earlier succeeded in fending off a road project that threatened to destroy the prime wounds and many old houses. Consequently, this led to the official declaration of Carcar as a heritage town.

At the forefront of this defense line that rekindle to culture, the CHCS, through its founding member and current president Sol Sanchez, initiated the Kabkabon Festival, a civic celebration held for the first time during the three celebrations on June 24, 2007.

The society has since turned its sights back to the wellspring of Filipino heroism—religion. With the Festival of Lights, the patroness of Carcar, Catherine of Alexandria, is honored in a dance procession of torches first seen at night fall).

The grand homes that line Santa Cruz Extension Street, the topnotch address, get the best view—with the wide windows overlooking the street. You even last year's evening swallow could miss the affair.

Carcar's old families must know a thing or two about historical conservation before it became a fad. While the old families of Cebu City have torn down their homes and houses to make room for commercial buildings, Carcar's "Old Money" has held on to the homeland hardwood floors.

They have done not only the will that ruined the country, but also the failure of the agricultural economy that the plan used to depend on. Still, they uphold the traditional lifestyle that has become [illegible] with considerable success in fiesta time by their scions.

The Carcar elite is a blend of the native and the ilustrado, mostly from Cebu City's Barrio. The Mercados, Moreras, Alfabetos and Bascunillas are among the natives, while the Abrecosos, Avilas, Cuis, Cuizons, Floriza, Gaisanagaras, Gaisanos, Mercados, Nools, Osmeñas, Regines, Sotelos, Sumisnoses and Velezes are from those of Parian.

The Chinese mestizos of the principalia began to fan out steadily from Parian after the official opening of Manila's port to the world in 1834, an event that effected a demand for raw materials from the provincial centers to supply the national capital.

At first, the encounter of Carcar's native elite with those of Parian was traumatic. In the 1860s, Don Pedro Cui of Parian foreclosed on the loan of Carcar's Don Tiburcio Bascunillo and seized the latter's lands.

But all's well that ends well.

Don Pedro's collateral descendant, a baron, married a son of the founder of Cebu Southwestern University. Doña Asunción Bascunillo sits de Kanlot, in a marriage blessed with great grandchildren. These Kanlots run a local hotels along with their Sharbel cousins on the Cui side.

Unions

A daughter of an Osmeña-Bascunillo union, Filomena, married Mariano Jesus Cuenco, the prominent politician and newspaper publisher from Carmen town in Cebu and Cebu City. Her eldest sister, Placida, also had an unromantic match with Carcar president (mayor) Don Mauro Abad, elder brother of the longest-serving congressman in Philippine history to date, Don Mariano Abad.

The present brother of Don Mariano and Don Filomena, Don Vicente, would have an Alfabeto as a son-in-law. The Alfabetos have produced a town mayor and two vahcas de barangay, and have married into the Cui family. The child of this Alfabeto-Abad union is now the steward of the coastal resort mansion built in the 1870s known as Ang Balay ng Balay.

Further down Santa Catalina, from the main Abad house, is the Balay na Tisa. This 1899 abode with a clay-tile roof (hence the name) is owned by the descendants of Doña Ana Canadas and Don Ramón Sanmiguel, whose daughter would marry Don Jose Quesada of the Parian.

The house anticipated the economic boom of Cebu in 1860, formalized by the opening of its port to international trade that year.

The Sanmiguel-Quesada daughter would marry a Valeriano from Bohol, and the many offspring of this union would ally themselves in marriage with the other old families like this book.

In the end, the encounter of Parian and Carcar proved a blessing for both. Akin to a Hellenistic merger, Parian culture enjoyed a period of extension in Carcar long after it was swallowed by the homogenizing vortex of big Cebu City life.

Carcar's golden age [illegible] the American colonial to the Commonwealth periods marked its rise as "cradle of Cebanon culture." It was a period that fine-tuned the culture of Old Parian and manifested in the stately, elegant homes of the Mercados, Nools and Bascunillos, in the colorful mestizo [illegible] productions of the Avilas, Gaisanagaras and Regines.

Mga bagong programang maghahatid ng kasiyahan, kilig,

Lahat ng 'to para

Mga news, reality shows, sitcoms, true-to-life dramas, a
biggest stars and talented personalities—lahat 'to kar

...uumu't saring drama at mga istorya ng tagumpay at pag-asa.

...a sa 'yo, Kapatid!

...ng shows at public service programs, kasama ang iba sa ...nanin sa tuya. Kaya tutok lang araw-araw, oras-oras!

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OPINION

Lawyerly rationalizations

EDITORIAL

THERE MUCH we know now from the daily hearings being conducted to find out what really happened at the Quirino Grandstand last Aug. 23: The police were untrained, ill-equipped, unfocused and chaotically organized to respond to the Rolando Mendiola hostage drama without any nuancing measure of professional care to responsibility.

The lapses went beyond the merely procedural. The presence of one too many negotiators, the murky lines of communication that sent out conflicting signals to the

hostage-taker, the lack of an effective crisis committee, the failure by the police to lay down ground rules both for their handling of the situation and the media covering it, the arbitrary statements and actions broadcast live on TV that goaded Mendiola into a murderous rage, the deployment of a SWAT team less capable than one already on standby, even the use of "required" bullet proof vests by the assault squad—everything pointed to shocking institutional rot in the Philippine National Police.

But this much we know now, too: Their civilian counterparts have as much responsibility for the fiasco as the bungling police, though they are not getting the same degree of public lustering as the police have endured. While Chief Supt. Rodolfo Magtibay has become the PNP's unofficial lamb by becoming the first to step down to soothe the international outcry, various politicians and government officials whose hands were also deep in the hostage drama—often with as much turpitude as recklessness—have been quick to exonerate themselves.

Take Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim. It was his order to blindfold Mendiola's brother that led SPO2 Gregorio Mendiola to come running in front of TV cameras for protection. The police could have let him be for the entire time; instead, they manhandled him amid much scuffling and shrieking by his family. The crazed brother-in-the-law now everything and began shooting soon after.

Yet Lim said he didn't order Mendiola's arrest, only that he be handcuffed and brought elsewhere. For a police officer and politician who prides himself on his straightforward, no-nonsense record, Lim chooses he can get away with being lawyerly here. Handcuffs are the more basic symbol of a cop's arresting power under the law. When one is charged with these moral chutzpa—"possession" was the term Lim used—what is that but an arrest?

Wednesday's hearing brought more chilling nuance to this pivotal incident in the hostage saga. Magtibay revealed that what Lim actually said was "Sir Rondo na lang da'hin 'yon (Bring him to Rondo instead)," though he declined to explain what that order means.

SPO2 Mendiola seemed to know, and that's why he squealed for dear life when the cops came for him. Watching the tense events on TV, one wondered what on earth he was so deadly afraid about that he had to resist mightily. Now things appear clearer. Magtibay's revelation of a dark undercurrent in Lim's order lends credence to SPO2 Mendiola's own allegations before the fact-finding panel that he overheard Lim saying, "Kapag naraliay ang hostage-taking, iyong wala na 'yan"—a directive he interpreted to mean that he was to be summarily executed down a dog path his brother. Given this "Dirty Harry" separation of hostile's weapon, who could blame him?

Even on the matter of Lim and Magtibay leaving the command center to grab dinner just when the shooting had begun, the mayor chooses to be a Bill Clinton with his words. He did not order Magtibay to go with him to Kenneth Restaurant, he protested. "I just invited him. If he said that he felt it was important for him to stay, I would not have pressured him." Right—as if the subordinate could refuse a superior's summons at a time when it was paramount that they mark together.

There's the strange case, too, of Deputy Ombudsman Emilio Gonzales, who has denied the accusation made at the hearings that he tried to extort P150,000 from Mendiola in exchange for dropping the latter's case.

Gonzales could well be innocent. But the specific nature of the charge—why P150,000 and not something higher?—as well as the question of how the disgraced policeman knew Gonzales, begs further inquiry. But the deputy ombudsman, an official charged with the very duty of ensuring trust and transparency in public governance, has declined to reinstruct the proceedings by refusing to answer questions before the Ito Lima panel.

The charge is shocking, to say the least, in merely doing a fact-finding investigation, not a criminal probe. That Ombudsman would rather clam up in a grievous charge does explain his side tells us there may be more to what the hostage taker was saying than meets the eye.

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Bladed fury

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

THE SHARPEST SWORD is controlled fury spoken, the Buddha said. Anti-crime crusader Senorita Ang Sue chanted with that blade over the falling of eight Hong Kong tourists during the probe. "You had the line (to hostage taker Rolando Mendiola)," a furious Ang Sue told Radyo Ibis Nationwide's Ekstasi Bogus and nine listeners. "But you didn't bother to make an appeal to free them."

"Marissa Ang Sue was right," wrote Tulfo, TV-5 chief correspondent told Justice Secretary Leila de Lima. The media tried to "out-scoop" each other. The net result was for ratings that ring each registers, not save lives. Did the search for hostage crisis morph into a "caprice" of broadcast competition?

Antonio Lopflog, broadcaster, Tulfo squeezed in a line to Mendiola. The late TV monitor showed the arrest of the gunman's brother, SPO2 Gregorio Mendiola, he reported. That triggered Mendiola's massacre.

When was the Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster's code book previewed? Or Program Standard's "Guidelines for Covering Hostage Taking Crises"?

"Strongly resist the temptation to telephone a hostage-taker," cautions Poynter. One writing question from the interested "could jeopardize someone's life."

"Calling could tip up phone lines or other crisis-complicate communication efforts by negotiators," the institution went. "Always assume that the hostage-taker has access to the reporting."

"Put a live mike south the hostage door?" UP Mass Communication students pressed broadcasters.

He violated no law, replied DZRH anchors. "We only reported. We are not negotiators. It's not our fault."

Veteran columnist Sigfuberto Tigles agrees. "The (net's) overarching job is to serve the victims, by whatever means," he asserts. "Cued as it was round, concern about the safety of hostages cannot be media's concern, even if we applaud media people whose priority is such...."

Inquirer's Randy David has such priority in

his vw. In his column "Madness and accountability," David writes: "Where lives are at stake ... one does not mind an explicit protocol for media behavior. ... RMN anchors kept harangue-ing Mendiola on the air."

"(This prompted) investigating committee member Senator Ang Sue's justified retort: 'Your profession should never be more important than human lives,'" David adds. "It is what a commemorative ceremonial to live and to die requires of all citizens."

Common sense compelled the RMN to direct blanket cutbacks of incidents. Individual stations began internal reviews. GMA-7 has now plotted and published its own guidelines for hostage coverage.

ABS-CBN aired a report that pinpointed police deployment, wrote Ester Sutton of this Media Bureau. But it refused to air live the hostage-taker's threats. It negotiations were called for a temporary blackout, the station would have complied.

The big few "clashes" are compelling media to re-examine standards beyond from painful experience. These include Somali pirates hijacking cargo ships, Abu Sayyaf hostage in Sipadan and terrorism handling ambassadors from an Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries meeting in Austria.

The Associated Press and Der Spiegel in Germany have guidelines that make preventive harm a first duty. Here are excerpts from British Broadcasting Corp. protocols:

"We should consider ethical issues raised by providing a platform to hostage-takers, especially if they make direct contact. We must remain in editorial control. ... Thus, we do not interview a perpetrator live on air ... or broadcast any video and/or audio provided by a perpetrator.

"We broadcast recordings made by perpetrators, whether of staged events, violent acts or their victims, only after referral to a senior editorial figure. ... We delay broadcasting live material of sensitive stories, specially when the outcome is unpredictable.

"When reporting stories relating to hijacking, kidnapping, hostage-taking, we must limit to and bar from the police and other authorities about anything which, if repeated, could cause harm to the situation.

"Occasionally the police will ask us to withhold information. We will normally comply with a reasonable request, but we will not knowingly broadcast anything that is untrue."

The BBC adds that "the procedure for dealing with such requests must be followed." Translation: Those who don't follow are fired. Will that happen here?

In our problems deeper than reckless broadcasting? Read the New York Times obituary on New York City police chief Bernard Kerik[illegible].

He foresaw in the 1972 hostage and murder of 11 Israeli athletes at the Olympics in Munich an emerging threat. And he nobbled today's unholy emulated hostage-negotiation team.

Six years, in 1973, strained the release of 12 unharmed hostages in Brooklyn. The gunmen surrendered after 43 hours—the first of many bloodless rescues.

"He demonstrated the effectiveness of patriotic negotiation over armed confrontation," the New York Times said. "His Endeavor de-emphasized confrontation, focusing instead on saving lives."

Our broadcasters dashed to the Quirino Grandstand and reported the obvious. But who saw—and pointed out—the subtle institutional sum of such emergencies?

For almost a decade, Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's Department of Interior and Local Government coddled the temperamental Kerik. But it never enabled a negotiating team. Such a team would have made life difference in the Luneta.

"We are limited, alas, not by our abilities, but by our lack of vision."

* * *

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Time for self-examination

GET REAL

Sylvia Colibao-Mangold

ALL RIGHT, let's face it. If Bush's administration has fumbled and bumbled and stumbled since Day 1: issuing orders that had to be revoked and amended almost immediately (like one which would have crippled the "reconnecting and which, alas, has still not been properly corrected); making the wrong conclusions about the government's budget and such alarming misunderstandings as "private-public partnership" as the solution to the government's resource scarcity problem; appointing people whose integrity and/or competence are questionable; doing a Gloria (the Cita Lorenzo-Jocko Bolante case is almost identical to the Rolando Puno situation in that the underperformer was appointed before the agency was effectively shoved down the latter's throat); and of course the latest series of blunders with regard to the hostage crisis.

For all these, P-Noy has met with a barrage of criticisms (some included). Hardly any "honeymoon" with the media and the public was observed (no time for one).

The critics, it should be noted, belong to two distinct groups. The Tulfoweeklies, including the political opposition, who point out the shortcomings (some very much imagined) with media glee in an attempt to prove that he was the wrong choice and to position themselves for the next elections. And the Friendlies, well-wishers and supporters who either have taken to heart his invitation for them to participate (they are his bosses), or who are anxious for him (and the country) to do well, and cannot stand on getting through his serious nonsense who they feel are part of the problem rather than the solution.

Unfortunately, it is not easy for the general public to distinguish between the two groups, so they tend to regard criticism as an indictment on the President, does not have what it takes—in the vernacular, he's a "palpak."

One hopes that they don't get carried away. He should all consider that new administra-

tion's perceived mistakes are actually par for the course. They are part of its learning curve, which, as most learning curves are, is J-shaped. This describes a situation where things tend to get worse before they get better—the curve falls before it rises to reach higher than its starting point (see J-curve).

It is not only in the learning process that a J curve is observed. One sees it in various fields such as economics, demography, finance, medicine and political science. In finance, for example, private equity funds have been noted to deliver negative returns in the early years (due to management fees, investment costs, investment write-downs—can you see the analogy readers?), with investment gains in the later years as portfolios mature. In economics, the trade balances of a country after a depreciation or a devaluation tend to show bigger deficits (or smaller surpluses) (imports cost more, exports bring less), before import volumes decrease and export volumes increase, decreasing the deficit and/or increasing the surplus.

Taken to this context, the Friendlies' behavior is because of their desire to get the failing part of the J curve so far as shallow (failing shouldn't be allowed to get that much worse) and as narrow (get the gains start to kick in more quickly) as possible, and the spins to keep as possible (the benefits increase at a faster rate). The Tulfoweeklies would want nothing better than for that curve to decrease very steeply and to the very gently if at all.

The Friendlies want P-Noy to succeed, and wring their hands to distress when he stumbles; the Tulfoweeklies want him to fail, and rub their hands in glee at the same spectacle. Where can citizens to help, the other side want to hurt.

I hope the President can discern between the two groups, and act accordingly. The decision-the-weapons-mentality is not an option, and if his reaction is that with those kind of friends, he doesn't need any enemies, he is sadly mistaken. What will they have left to say when he's no more if those around him are busy licking ass, or covering theirs, or stabbing each other in the back? When do they have time to think about the country? Perhaps the President would achieve his goals earlier and better if he deposited him on his pet issues and more on objective outsiders to handhold for him. But of course, this is predicated on the assumption that he will heed their recommendations. His predecessor had a Search Committee, used her discretion only.

But while we are holding the President to his word—that he wants to hear from us and that he considers us, the people, to be his bosses—it is certainly time we looked to what our own responsibilities are. Has it really that one of the most pressing necessities of P-Noy's presidency now, unless representatives of civil society, led by Sister Mary John Mananzan, pledged to do their part in pushing the Philippines forward. Time for self-examination now. Are we maximizing ourselves? Are we doing our part? If not, what are we going to do about it? Are we going to be part of the problem, or part of the solution? And where do the media come in? We are supposed to be objective observers, holding everyone at arm's length, calling a spade a spade, as is now. And yet, let us face it again, an unconformable large proportion within our ranks act more like interested parties.

We're all in this together, folks, and we can't afford for the Philippines to continue floundering. She deserves better.

New versus old poverty reports

SOCIAL CLIMATE

Mahar Mangahas

THE NEW NSO report on poverty is from 2009. Last Monday, through BusinessWorld as usual, David Hyndman Solomon reported: Self-Rated Poverty (SRP) at 50 percent of households, and Self-Rated Food Poverty (SRFP) at 28 percent of households, as of its Second Quarter Survey of Filipinos (SQSF) 2010 (nationwide, 1,200 households). I presume sampling error was given.

Although the field dates were at the end of the 3-month period, the new data point was established inadvertently in the report's tables and charts as the first of the new Aquino administration. I only noticed the Palace on Thursday, my first day in the office after an official travel and a slight flu. It has been interested on the website.)

In the previous (9th) survey of March 2010, both SRP (then at 43 percent, tying the second time of that magnitude) and SRFP (at 27 percent) had been at record lows, but the entire SRP data series that started in 1983 (once a total of 51 surveys, quarterly since 1992) and the SRFP data series that started in 1988 (a total of 31 surveys, quarterly since 2004).

The jump in the two measures by 7 points each (note: 1 point is equal to over 100,000 households) underscore the great volatility of poverty, not as short as quarter to one quarter. The extent of poverty does not keep still even time. It does not move according to plan, as we were told in some cases in all areas of the country. Poverty is quite dynamic, and should not be taken for granted.

Granting that poverty can move either upward or downward over one quarter, what is the long term trend, if any? I would say that poverty has trended (roughly downward, especially in the past 15 years. The problem is that the general decline did not start early enough, and has not been fast enough, to meet the ambitions of, respectively, the so-called Millennium Development Goals (MDG).

The MDG's target regarding poverty is to halve its proportion — not its absolute number, which is more difficult — over the period 1990 to 2015, i.e., if the proportion of the poor, however defined, is set equal to 100 in 1990, the target is to reach 50 by 2015. This implies reducing the initial proportion by an average of 2 percent per year over 25 years.

In the 11 SRFP poverty surveys during the (very ingenious) era, there was no clear trend in power by the DEP percentage ranged at 66 in May 1998 and closed at 68 in April 1995, but there were at no three times when it was as high as 70 to 72. It was always at least 60, except for the first survey (at 1987, when it was 43 in March, and a relatively low 51 in October.

In the MDG starting year 1990, SRP was at 66 in April and 71 in December, or an average of 68. This implies a full-period poverty target of 34 percent for most the poverty MDG by 2015. The Self-Rated Food Poverty percentage, surveyed once in 1990, was at 37, thus putting its 2015 MDG at 18.5.)

In 22 SRFP poverty surveys in FVDs (late, SRP was in the 40s in 3 surveys, in the 30s in 3 different times, and in the 70s once. From 1995 onwards it settled down to the low 50s/high 30s.

In 11 SRFP poverty surveys of Ilaya's time, SRP had a relatively narrow range of 54 to 63. It finished in the mid-50s in the last four, ending at 56.

In Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's time there were 11 SRFP poverty surveys up to March 2004, and 16 of them from June 2004 onward. In the first segment, SRP fluctuated between 53 and 61 percent. In the second segment it was in the 50s seventeen times and in the 40s nine times, ending at 46 last June.

Can the implied 2015 MDG of 34 be met five years from now? To do that, the SRP percentage must first return to the 40s consistently, as soon as possible. The difficult part will be to enter the realm of the 30s, which it has never reached before. I would consider the poverty MDG reached when SRP no longer goes above 40.

The new official MDG progress report will refer, presumably in 2006. The world's governmental progress report on the MDGs is simply the sum of ministerial (country) manifestations of commitment to continuing the war on poverty. It is a new package that does not contain any new data, since it limits itself to the official statistics on poverty, which are (as historically presented only once every three years.

The last reference year was 2006, which is already four years ago. There are only eight data points in the entire official poverty data series, from 1985 to 2006. They show poverty declining steadily up to 2000, but increasing from 2003 to 2006.

The 2009 report will be based on the official poverty figure, based on government income and expenditure surveys of 2009 (i.e., under Gloria Arroyo's watch), can be expected in preliminary form in October 2010, and in final form in early 2011, by which time it will be time to start preparing the 2010 report.

After 2006, the next year for official poverty measurements are scheduled to be 2012 (the preliminary reporting to President Aquino in late 2013), and 2015 (the preliminary reporting in late 2016, in 6 years' successive steps). Thus the present administration will have only one official poverty measurement to report applicable to his own administration, and still have time remaining in (mid?) government policies and programs accordingly.

For the forthcoming official 2009 poverty estimate to have any hope for achieving the MDG, it should not only be below poverty in 2006 but also below, or at least no higher than, poverty in 2003. If the official 2003/2009 trend proves not better than flat, the government should immediately make plans to reconcile poverty in 2015, and at least annually thereafter.

* * *

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The fencer

I WILL in love for the first time when I was 16 years old. And 16 years later, I am still in love with the same guy. Sometimes it shocks me to think that after 18 years of not saving him, he is still in my mind constantly.

I met him for the first time in fencing practice. I was 12 then, and he was 15. I didn't have a crush on him just yet, because everything that he had physically I never really liked. It was clear from the start that he hated me as a little sister to him.

Looking back now, I wonder how wrong I was when I thought that he would go for someone so young. I guess how can make you hope so much.

When we first met, he was about to enter into a relationship with one of my friends. As I said, he didn't create a spark in my face brain immediately; he was just the guy who hated my name, and loved to annoy me because I had grown fat. Until I lost all the unwanted weight, and he seemed to have noticed it. He started talking to me in manner which I found quite flattering, he believed in my strengths and talents, not just as a fencer, but also as a basketball player. The shy, fat kid was starting to get compliments, and I liked it.

I assumed it like the pressure that I was, because he believed in me, he would teach me fencing moves, which eventually worked with my opponents. I was starting to love myself, something I never did before. I was starting to be my own friend. I was like a miniature piece of glass before, very precious and rather vulnerable, until he came, another glass which was so brilliant, and attached himself to me, even as a friend. I felt brilliant, too.

Then he took himself out of my life, and I was shattered. Like a pathetic little broken cup. It happened when I abandoned fencing to focus on my studies. I wrote him a letter saying I was leaving because of my studies, and that I would miss his jokes. If he knew me that much, and I knew he liked my comedians, I guess him my telephone number, but he never called. I guess we can say it was partly my fault.

I soon found myself seeing a lot again, not taking a bath as often as before, and no longer caring how I looked or smelled again. These were things I never did when he was around. When he believed in me. When he was my fan.

All those days of him teaching me how to fence, how to play basketball, how to make friends and brothers, are gone. At first I denied the fact that I was depressed without him. I slowly admitted to myself that I still loved him, after many attempts to convince myself that I no longer loved him. My friends told me to stop denying, or to stop being so fickle about my emotions.

I went through the rest of high school, college and graduation without seeing him. Ten years.

I cannot face him now. I can't lie. I have not accomplished much in fencing. I don't have much to show him, except for my college degree. And I have found he has a girlfriend.

No wonder he never replied to my text messages, Facebook messages and Friendster requests and messages. But I have decided to turn this negative into something positive. I will live each day trying to be the best person I can be, someone he can be proud of if ever we see each other again. I get up every morning still hoping that someday I will see him again.

Until then, I would just like to tell him how much he has changed me, and how much I love him. I have a feeling he knows who he is once he reads this article.

* * *

Kate C. Buenviaje, 26, is a journalism graduate of Lyceum College.

YOUNG BLOOD

Kate C. Buenviaje

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twenty-something set below.—Ed.

Why children learn better while using mother tongue

COMMENTARY

Ricardo Ma. Duran Nolasco

LAST JULY 14, 2009, the Department of Education changed its fundamental education policy from the old "bilingual" set up (of using two (2) languages in MTBMLE one, "Filipino) Against-One system) to the new "multilingual" set up (of using three (3) or more in its 10-point agenda for education. According to him, we should have English to communicate ourselves to the world, Filipino to communicate ourselves to our country, and our mother tongue to connect ourselves to our heritage.

Languages are the primary communication like English should be part of the multilingual instruction of a country. The graduates of this system should find relevance within and beyond their ethnic and national boundaries. Most world knowledge is accessible in English, and so, knowledge of English is certainly useful. It is not true, however, that students will not learn science and mathematics if they do not know English. The ideas of science are not bound by one language and one culture.

On the other hand, many studies indicate that students learn more and read in their L1, and therefore in an L2, outperform those taught to read exclusively in an L2. In the Philippines, the Lubuagan Kalinga First experiment showed the L1-experimental classes scoring nearly 90 percent in the Grade 1, 2 and 3 tests compared to just over 50 percent mean score for the L2-control classes.

Furthermore, the popular belief that focusing the time for English or making it the exclusive medium of instruction to improve our English is increasingly being proven untrue. Large-scale research during the last 30 years has provided compelling evidence that the critical variable in L2 development in children is not the amount of exposure, but the timing and the manner of exposure. The U.S. year Thomas and Collier's 101 study showed that non-native English learners who were schooled in under an all-English curriculum scored lowest (between the 11th and 22nd percentile ranks) in the national tests. English learners, who were given L1 support for six years scored the highest (between the 53rd and 79th percentile ranks), well above the national norm for their respective grade levels.

For non-native speakers of English, like most of us, the best way is to teach it as an L2 and to teach it well. This depends on the proficiency of teachers, the availability of adequate models of the language in the learner's social environment, and well-designed curriculum. (Some countries fail totally) be used as languages of instruction.

In 1957, the local languages became the medium of instruction in Grades 1 and 2. The tentative education policy was temporarily abolished in 1974, when the bilingual education policy was imposed. In the Philippine Constitution in 1998, the Department of Education started the Lingua Franca program.

MTBMLE will not work by simply increasing the time for English or by translating existing materials.

The late Rolando Tinio once spoke of a basic law aiming to that our languages are enforced upon by the "tyranny" thinkers. He reminded us that the advanced state of the English language was reached through the efforts of its users. We can only intellectualize our languages by using them.

* * *

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Breakfast with the Bernidos

BUSINESS MATTERS

Edilberto C. de Jesus

REPORT: Of interview at 400, husband and wife Christopher and Sheila Victoria Bernido traveled to MIT in Washington then flew hotel to Manila for informal discussions on education issues over a hurried breakfast. We caught a glimpse then of the qualities that had earned the couple the 2010 Ramon Magsaysay award for education.

Both bachelor had earned PhDs in physics from the Ateneo de Manila University, where Christopher is currently and their achievements in teaching and research, they walked the talk. Concerned over the state of science education in the country, they gave up secure careers at the University of the Philippines to be in a position to help schools, Sagip, Bernido.

Unlike their protégé, students of the Central Visayan Institute Foundation (CVIF), which Chris Bernido's parents had established, impressed their scores in the national tests and in the college entrance examinations of top public schools. In the process, CVIF's success proved several things.

First, the Bernidos showed that committed leadership and improved pedagogy could enable even poor students in rural schools to make it to college. Second, their achievement set aside the value of the GASTPE program managed by the Fund for Assistance to Private Education (FAPE). With the subsidy of P6,000 per student, the program helped keep students in CVIF and out of already overcrowded public high schools.

The government should do more to use private capacity in the private schools instead of constructing additional classrooms. It seems also wise for the many small private schools that are the unwieldy Department of Education bureaucracy to introduce innovations in the curriculum and teaching methods.

In 2006, the Bernidos designed the "Learning Program in One Session" program to address the severe shortage of qualified physics teachers in the country. Launched by the FAPE in 2008, it is now implemented in over 200 private high schools, using all the large number of other schools that have been trained. Details of the Bernidos' Dynamic Learning Program model.

The program includes a portfolio of learning activities that students individually complete, supported by weekly video-based lectures featuring National Master Teachers. Text messaging and electronic mail permit real-time teacher-expert and student-expert interactions.

Their experiences with the Dep-Ed—poor classroom facilities, unprepared teachers, outdated pedagogies—has made the Bernidos wary of the government's plans to add two years to the basic education cycle. It is not supposed that K12 plans may try to identify the 600 awardees with their cause, without noting the Bernidos' carefully measured expression of their doubts.

On several points, we found ourselves on the same side of the fence. We questioned their point that more years in school, without improvement in the training of teachers, in the quality of textbooks, and in the supply of teachers, curriculum and classrooms would not produce the desired results in the learning outcomes of our students.

But perhaps, their view that "no education is worse than bad education" can lead too enlightened people to some extreme and risky conclusions. Surely, it would be unwise to condemn the Depld's 500,000 classes for deficiencies only bad education. And who would be brave or rash enough to judge that the education offered in school as to justify her/his calling children out of school?

The Bernidos criticized government for inadequate support to education and questioned the information that President Aquino had raised the Depld budget by P60 billion, with the caveat—which we shared—that the money should be judiciously spent. It would not seem typical for the Bernidos to say no additional taxes investing to save the K12 global standard.

It is true that countries are now rethinking the way they are providing for their children's education. But while even poor countries are committing to K12, none is considering reducing the cycle for basic education. Indeed, even countries already at K12 are designing ways to provide more learning time.

Just last week, Singapore's Ministry of Education permitted more students to skip the O-level exams, normally taken at the end of a four-year high school cycle to qualify students for two years of A-level, pre-university studies. The O-level exams, from the national exams will allow more time for "holistic education" to develop the physical and affective domains. This is a useful correction to the idea that schools only for learning the academic curricula.

The Bernidos have also called for a shift to a system that will allow students to leave when is required for admission to college in 10 or even nine years. Even granting that they can, this would not compel to no impose the nine years on all students to 10—since there are job market 10- and 11-year-olds who find the desire or interest in more or no college. We should emulate the Singapore strategy of "ability-driven education," giving students more time to learn at their own pace.

If the Bernidos' experience has taught many years what it takes students everywhere size 12 years, imagine the benefit of an additional two years. Our aspiration should be to raise the competency of those who will leave the system at each stage—point of schooling and to reduce the lengthof diploma or college-degree programs for those leaving us.

The Bernidos are eloquent and passionate in articulating their opinions. In addendum, they should not be so defensive in their efforts to sell. Just the merits of their system and they also to train supporters of contrary views. They admit that they are not fully familiar with the history of the K12 plan and hope to engage their advocates in further discussions.

This is a dialogue we should encourage. But it should not deter further experimentation with the lessons model. Neither should it derail government's long-delayed plans to provide more learning time for the Filipino youth.

* * *

Edilberto C. de Jesus is president of the Asian Institute of Management.

NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS:

Send your contributions by e-mail to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph, together with your address, age and the school, course and year you're enrolled in, if employed, the position you're holding and the company you work with. Unpublished or thoughtful should not have been previously published.

IN THE NEWS

Delfin Lee

The INQUIRER is a member of the
PHILIPPINE PRESS INSTITUTE

Media blackout bigger threat

THE NATION, Inquirer, Journalists of the Philippines (NUJP) grieve the loss of so many lives in the hostage-taking tragedy at the mission in Rizal last Aug. 23.

We condole with the families of all the victims of this tragedy and set into the calls for a thorough and wide investigation of why and how the bloodbath happened.

The Philippine government and the Philippine National Police have already acknowledged the errors and shortcomings in their response to the incident. We believe that they were primarily responsible for controlling the situation, ending the crisis and securing the safety of the hostages.

But even as we grieve, we call on our colleagues in the media to noticeably and comprehensively examine how we covered this event and if our coverage in any way contributed to the tragic end of the hostage-taking.

It is media's responsibility to cover events and report them as comprehensively and truthfully as possible. But even colleagues have clearly violated ethical standards and established procedures and guidelines in covering crisis situations, including hostage-taking incidents. Such guidelines have been laid down by various media associations and journalism scholars. We urge news organizations to abide by these guidelines and to ensure that those that attempt to cover crisis situations are adequately resourced and informed.

We also encourage media owners, leaders and organizations to meet and agree on a set of protocols for the industry to guide us during media situations.

The hostage-taking incident has once again highlighted the need for more training and education for media practitioners to make sure that we do not aggravate harm in the performance of our work.

But even as we examine our actions and admit mistakes and shortcomings, we cannot draw against the abrogation of our right to cover important events of public interest. We oppose Senate Bill 2727 filed by Gilo Rep. Lito Quinaonding and similar measures aimed at imposing a media blackout during crisis situations. Legislated restrictions on media coverage are more dangerous and could pave the way for abuses and excesses by authorities responding to crisis situations.

—JOSEFINA BARAQUIEL, chair, National Union of Journalists of the Philippines; #11 Pilipino, 109 Int. Center cor. Sct. Tuazon Street, cor. Ultimate Ave., Barangay Laging Handa, QC

Grateful to have Tiglao as an ally

LETTERS

THE WHOLE (in Family Planning and Development Inc.) team good, it was a well and non-exempt organization, would like to express its sincere sincere appreciation to Mr. Bernardo Tiglao's (Tiglao's column titled "There are 100 million of us now," Opinion, 8/12/10).

Our organization is very pleased to know that we have an ally in this issue in a person of such stature. Aside from this, we would like to commend his unbridled critical stance regarding the Catholic Church's needless interference in the debate on reproductive health.

The most important thing perhaps is that Mr. Tiglao has finally made this clear in his article—artificial should be taken immediately because while this issue is being debated by politicians and lambasted by some members of the religious sector, Filipinos are suffering.

For years now, The Forum has been at the forefront of the battle for the passage of the reproductive health bill. More than that, The Forum believes in the intrinsic right of Filipino couples and of individuals to be in control of their reproductive health by having access to accurate information as well as to effective and quality services.

Again, we wish to thank Ambassador Tiglao for helping enlighten the public on this matter. The more dead advocacy would not have gone for ruthless people like him.

—BENJAMIN DE LEON, president, The Forum for Family Planning & Development Inc., Rm. 301, Ang Kabut ng Monte Bldg., Magsaysay Street, Davao City

Root cause of hostage rescue fiasco

THE TONGUE reading of the hostage rescue last Aug. 23 is an object lesson moment for my generation. We have not outlived the "Manual On How Not To Stage A Hostage Crisis" yet. What's a superior who President Aquino was one of his own counsel. To arrive at the right solution, one must first correctly identify the problem.

The problem in the hostage crisis was not in the newsmaps' media coverage or in the lack of video on the gist of our politics. The problem was in the lack of internal work at the time of the assault. Still together, there was no attempt to be an expert on live radio/television solutions that the shooter of gas masks, controlled explosive devices, flash lights, night vision goggles, proper SWAT uniforms and the like contributed to the failure to launch a quick and successful response to the crisis. This problem was logistical in nature, the very same kind of problem that has hobbled the new administration.

We must tackle other issues with the Department of Education because of internal problems. Also, there should be a comprehensive overhaul of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport was calculated for lack of proper equipment. Pagasa failed to track correctly the path of a typhoon also because of lack of equipment. Corruption is behind the inability of the Bureau of Internal Revenue to collect correctly the taxes of a Philippine corporation and of individuals, as he is in control of their respective hands by having access to accurate information as well as to effective and quality services.

Again, we wish to thank Ambassador Tiglao for helping enlighten the public on this matter. The more dead advocacy would not have gone for ruthless people like him.

—BENJAMIN DE LEON, president, The Forum for Family Planning & Development Inc., Rm. 301, Ang Kabut ng Monte Bldg., Magsaysay Street, Davao City

People the driving force behind Enrile's political success

IN HIS Aug. 17 column, Conrado de Quiros accused Senator President Juan Ponce Enrile of political opportunism and backstabbing. These are harsh accusations that roughly lacking in objectivity and accuracy.

One can indeed wonder why Senator Enrile has survived in the political arena for more than four decades since 1986 when he was first appointed undersecretary of finance. But if De Quiros has any political sense, he should know that nobody survives in politics for long, especially in a democracy, without the support of the people.

After relieving the People Power Revolution that toppled the Marcos regime in 1986 at the risk of his life, Enrile has been elected three to the Senate and once to a congressman. This, despite all the unmerited charges hurled against him, despite his being aware of the nature of the opposition and chances of his ever serving independently and succeeding to his own detriment.

It would take too much space to recount all of Enrile's achievements in public office. Suffice it to say that during the Marcos regime, he enforced the harshness of martial rule, preventing the increase of the opposition and helping free political detainees. In the post-martial law era, he has employed his awareness and experience to work wise laws, such as those making the tax burden, lowering the rate of uncertainty and maintenance fees and increasing exemptions.

De Quiros wonders why Senator Enrile had succeeded in getting elected by his peers were as Senate president, the same wish, not a dissenting vote. He neither is or shadowy backroom bargaining, as if politics were not in essence the art of compromise. Our colleagues thus invoke the character of our senators and President Aquino who, he asserts, was part of the process. We seem to fancy that we have been blessed advantage by our getting for the chairmanship of the Blue Ribbon Committee, but Senator Santiago had already apologized to Enrile for the harsh words she had said on the issue.

Our can only hope that as we move on as a new era in the presidency of Benigno Aquino, De Quiros would shed his political and personal prejudices, and look at the political developments in our country with more objectivity and good sense, and that he's a source of enlightenment and hope, rather than of confusion and pessimism.

—RINA PAUL TALAVERA, lp.sala13@gmail.com

Koko's votes 'massacred' twice

THE (I a reminder to Atty. Nancy Binay's) Dasmariñas (Cavite) area you doing to the Senate Majority's Koko to right in calling MT (Senate Electoral Tribunal) Resolution 07-026 a "shameful act." For me, allowing Zubiri's counter protest to proceed is a shameful act. It is not only shameful; it is also unscrupulous, incredulous, immoral—a disobedience of our protest-counter and electoral process.

In Koko Pimentel's protest case against Migz Zubiri, how could the cultural attendees have reconciled with their conscience, remaining their have to remember?

But all we know, Pimentel's case is our totally unrelated to the Magandanao protests. Protest and the area within the protest have been "massacred," not only once but twice by the "Magandanao" protest. For the first time, the controversy of Magandanao were (where Gloria Empress presided the most votes) which paved the way for Zubiri's proclamation as the "12th senator" in the 2007 historical election. Second time is the 2007 SET which, after the revision of votes, found Pimentel sweeping Zubiri's chair had has decided not withdraw to overcome the latter's request to protest that ruled for a revision of votes in 75,260 precincts.

So, How is right again in saying that such a revision would create almost all the process to the winner?

—RENATO L. SANGIL, MD, vice president-Mindanao, PDP Laban, 1233 Reyes St., Cagayan de Oro City

Cigarette lovers as sweethearts

AFTER THE election of Sen. Noynoy Aquino as the president, I was both amused and bemused with the suddenly active campaign waged by then Health Secretary Esperanza Cabral against smoking. Accompanied by aides, she visits around the city planters ing "No Smoking" signs on roads, billboards, motor vehicles and public conveyances. She even made the rounds of TV stations, declaring people about the health perils of smoking.

There was no doubt in my mind that the campaign would be good for someone. But I think it was wrong timing for the Department of Health to unplug the campaign, it being under the office of the President and with the incoming administration's campaign to "Kick Butt" already in full swing. Even Aquino was already handed with a footage of smoke-related cancer-ranging hints to quit smoking. I was only guess how Cabral's high-profile drive against smoking will be turned PDPs.

Smoking has been a habit of mankind since time immemorial. Despite the warning on cigarette packs—that smoking is not recommended by the surgeon general—or other similar advisories in medical journals, smoking is here to stay—unless and thwarted as long as tobacco plants are grown in Ilocos, Cagayan, and other lands are harvested and processed into cigarettes or cigars for smoking purposes.

While I was in college, I would smoke after meals so to stay awake while studying my lessons in night. But with my allowance, I could only afford to buy a scale or two—a few to time passed by. I became a regular smoker and I really enjoyed the unique, it addictive, ease of tobacco.

But I abandoned my smoking habit after I met a girl on a blind date that was as stamped by the girlfriend of a desperate brother at first sight. I let no time courting the Chinese-looking girl who eventually became my college sweetheart. She was a fourth-year nursing student in the same university I was attending. On that first date, she asked me if I smoked. I knew then that she disliked this until it cigarettes in my mouth—so I took it out and threw it away because she refused to be kissed knowing there was nicotine still-laced on my lips. This valuable buried me to quit smoking for awhile just to please her, and to be able to have her kiss more often.

Now, as to who is the lover-lover between a smoker and non-smoker, I leave that to the readers to answer. What I know is that when lovers embrace and kiss out of love for each other, they don't care without regard to whether their partners are smokers or non-smokers.

—ROBERTO "BOBBY" CECERES, business editor, Sabay Newsbreaks; 6316 Regional Office 6, Commonwealth Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City

DPWH chief thanks PDI for editorial

THIS HAS reference to the Inquirer's Aug. 6 editorial titled "Rules on the roads."

I sincerely appreciate the editorial, point-by-point, on the point of what I have been doing as secretary of public works and highways and my commitment to lead the DPWH in a transformation based on full transparency and accountability to the people.

As such, I will continue to call on the public to get involved in government monitoring and feedback regarding public works projects.

Thanks and more power to the Inquirer!

—ROGELIO L. SINGSON, secretary, Department of Public Works and Highways

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Pastor cancels Koran-burning amid int'l firestorm

From page A1

get 10 troops and give Islamic terrorists a rewarding God. Defense Secretary Robert Gates made the ridiculous leap of telling Jones personally.

Building models for 10 member Pentecostal church, the Dove Outreach Center, alongside Imam Muhammad Musri, the president of the Islamic Society of Central Florida, Jones said he relented when Musri assured him that the New York mosque will be moved.

Hours later, after Musri and the leader of the New York mosque denied such an agreement, Jones said Musri "clearly, clearly lied to us."

We're suspending it

"Given what we are now hearing, we are forced to rethink our decision," Jones said. "We are not right now, as we said yesterday, going to burn the Koran on the 11th, but we are suspending it."

Jones did not say whether the Koran burning could still be held on Saturday, but he said he expect all Musri to keep his word and respected "his intent to have NOT to back up one of the core tenets."

Jones had never invoked the mosque controversy as a reason for his planned protest. He cited his belief that the Koran is evil because it espouses something other than Christ's words and incites radical, violent behavior among Muslims.

But he said on Thursday after testimony that he prayed about the decision and concluded that if the mosque was moved, it would be a sign from God to call off the Koran burning.

"We are, of course, now against any other group burning Korans," Jones said. "We would right now ask no one to burn Korans. We are absolutely moving on that. It is not the time to do it."

Musri thanked Jones and his church members "for realizing the direction today to defuse the situation and bring to a positive end when has become the result of a spectacle that no one would benefit from except extremists and terrorists" who wanted see it to create future radicals.

'Stretched words'

After Jones accused him of lying, Musri said the pastor "stretched his words" in the announcement.

"I think there was no confusion to begin with. When we stepped out of the church, we had an agreement to meet in New York," Musri said. He added that Jones "said his many reasons for stopping is the wrong site. It would endanger the troops overseas, American traveling abroad and others around the world."

Musri said he told the pastor "that I personally believe the mosque should not be there, and I will do everything in my power to make sure it is moved," Musri said. "But there is not any offer from there (New York) that it will be moved. All we have agreed to is a meeting, and I think we would all like to see a peaceful resolution."

Musri said on Thursday night that he still plans to go ahead with the meeting on Saturday.

In New York, the leader of the Islamic center project, Imam Feisal Abdul Rauf, issued a statement saying he was glad Jones had decided not to burn the Koran and thanked him for his efforts to ease tensions between Muslims and Americans.

"We are not going to toy with our religion or any other. See we are going to burn," Rauf said. "We are here to extend our hands to build peace and harmony."

Wave of anger

Jones' decision to call off the Koran burning was made after a firestorm of criticism from Israel, over around the world. The Pope and Muslim religious and political leaders were among those saying him to reconsider his plans, which generated a wave of anger among Muslims in Afghanistan, hundreds of Afghans burned an American flag and chanted "Death to the Christians" in protest the planned Koran burning.

Obama told ABC's "Good Morning America" in an interview aired on Thursday that Jones' plan "is completely contrary to our values as Americans."

"And as a very practical matter, I just want him to understand that this stunt that he is talking about pulling could greatly endanger our young men and women who are in uniform," Obama said.

Secretary Gates announced Gen. Petraeus had confirmed that Gates called Jones about 4 p.m. EST on Thursday—shortly before the pastor's announcement. During the "very brief" call, Gates expressed "his grave concern about putting forward with this Koran burning would put the lives of our forces at risk...especially in Iraq and Afghanistan," Morrell said.

US pluralism

Morrell said earlier that the decision to burn a personal appeal was not very because it could provoke other extremists "who, all they want, is a call from us, and so." After Gates' call to Jones, Morrell said the secretary's "main concern was reminds about that is that if that phone call could save the life of one man or woman in uniform it was a call worth placing."

Hussein Haqqani, Pakistan's ambassador to the US, thanked Obama, Gates and other administration officials for their efforts. "This is definitely a positive outcome in showing America's tolerance and pluralism and should not go unappreciated in the Muslim world," Haqqani said.

The cancellation also was welcomed by Jones' neighbors in Gainesville, a city of 115,000 anchored by the sprawling University of Florida campus. At least two dozen Christian churches, Jewish temples and Muslim mosques dot the city but meditated to plan to be alive events, including Koran readings at services, in a counter-response to Jones' protest.

Pentecostal tradition

Jones' Dove Outreach Center is independent of any denomination. It follows the Pentecostal tradition, which teaches that the Holy Spirit can manifest itself to the modern day. Pentecostals often view themselves as engaged in spiritual warfare against satanic forces.

The pastor was not the only person to inject confusion into the debate over the New York mosque, which is planned to go up two blocks north of the crash-scene site. Donald Trump, who made a fortune in real estate, offered on Thursday to buy out a major investor in the real-estate partnership that controls the site where the 13-story Islamic center would be built.

Opponents argue it is insensitive to families and memories of Sept. 11 victims to build a mosque so close to where Islamic extremists flew planes into the World Trade Center and killed nearly 2,800 people. Proponents counter the project is a welcome act of religious freedom and diversity and say hatred of Muslims is feeding the opposition.

Trump trumped

In a letter released on Thursday by Trump's publicist, Trump told Sulaiman Ehsanullah that he would buy his stake in one of the two tower Manhattan buildings involved in the project for 25 percent more than whatever he paid—if the mosque is moved at least five blocks farther away from the Ground Zero site.

"I am making this offer as a resident of New York and citizen of the United States, not because I think the location is a spectacular one (because it is not), but because it will avert a very serious, unnecessary and costly problem for America that is destined, in my opinion, to only get worse," the letter said.

Ehsanullah's response: his side.

"This is just a cheap attempt to get publicity and get in the limelight," said his lawyer, Mohammed Khalifeh.

He added that the offer's lack of seriousness is evident in the price.

The group collectively paid $18.5 million for the building Trump offered to buy. The other is being leased.

Ehsanullah said the real-estate partnership had already received two offers in the ballpark of $20 million.

"We know what the value of the building is. If he were really interested in buying the building, he should have come forward with at least $20 million," Ehsanullah said. AP

In a wired world, the crises come instantly

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electronic worm of dementia, hate, mistrust and mistrust.

The Internet had condemned the "outrageous and gross person," Barack Obama called it "a recruitment bonanza for al Qaeda." Interpol convened government ministers to guard against new attacks. Britain's foreign secretary solemnly declared "persecution in the extreme."

'Clash of civilizations'

The most worrying reaction came in the Islamic world.

Hundreds of angry protesters marched in Afghanistan and Pakistan against the planned attack on the book. Muslims entrance as the word of God. Muslim governments appealed to Washington to prevent the act. Hamid Mir, one of Pakistan's commentators, who blamed Israel for the whole thing.

The furor over the Rev. Terry Jones' plan was merely the latest skirmish in the Internet age's "clash of civilizations," reaching back to the death sentence "fatwa" Iran issued against Salman Rushdie in 1989, and forward to today's Western message over Iran's sentencing of a convicted adulteress to death by stoning.

The most explosive occurred in 2006, after a Danish cartoonist depicted the Prophet Muhammad wearing a bomb-shaped turban. This "dressing sent 'round the world" sent protesters in Islamic countries into the streets to attack Danish Embassies.

Globalized news media

The increasingly globalized news media, coupled with the untrammeled world of blogs, tweets, e-mails, Flickr photos and YouTube videos, rife with misinformation, ignorance and invention, feed the fury that now sets afire overnight across oceans and time zones.

Some try not to supply kindling for the bonfires of hatred.

In its print edition on Thursday, The New York Times barely mentioned the planned Koran burning in Gainesville. The Associated Press also reported little. Only in 1999, until Fox

'I'm a victim, not a monster,' says land firm founder

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investigation, Lee said he and his business have already been harassed.

He said Globe Asiatique's cash flow has been all but wrecked, as 16.5 billion initial public offering jeopardized and the company has had to lay off a number of employees.

The company is even now considering filing a petition for court-assisted rehabilitation if things don't improve, Lee told business reporters and editors in a meeting last Thursday.

Victim, not villain

Lee said he is in fact the "victim" in this brewing scandal in which the company is embroiled, with every party linked of alleged irregularities in Globe Asiatique's loan arrangements with the state housing agency emerging in the media and in Congress.

The inquiries in late August ran a two-part report, detailing how Globe Asiatique supposedly took out almost P7 billion in housing loans on behalf of about 9,000 borrowers who were supposed to have bought units in its two Nevera housing developments in Bulacan and Mabalacat, Pampanga, between March 2008 and May 2010.

But hundreds of the loan accounts allegedly turned out to be spurious with a number of borrowers not even aware they had applied for and been granted big loans.

In the Nevera projects, Pag-Ibig Fund documents showed that Globe Asiatique paid a number of people and made them sign members' forms and notarized affidavits of income.

The company also allegedly recruited people ineligible to become Pag-Ibig members and took out the loan proceeds although housing units were not completed and had material deficiencies.

Lee, of course, denies all these allegations.

Unfairly crucified

Lee, who said all his land went to build a reputable name in the low-cost housing industry for the last 18 years, had all gone to waste, said the whole thing has been "blown out of proportion."

He said he is being unfairly crucified and believes there is a conspiracy to attack him with adverse media publicity in order to destroy his company. He denied public affiliation and destroy his cash flow.

"Maybe somebody wants me out of the picture," he said.

Asked if his reported ties with the former President and now Pampanga Rep. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo had anything to do with it, Lee said he was not particularly close to the former president.

He suspects that some Pag-Ibig Fund officials were part of the conspiracy against him.

"They know in their head I am a victim developer and I'm their best developer," he said, estimating that his company single-handedly accounts for about 35 percent of Pag-Ibig's housing loan portfolio.

Dubious accounts

He said he did not understand why the dubious accounts are being used to discredit him when it was Globe Asiatique that had reported some 1,000 doubtful accounts that it was monitoring to Pag-Ibig about three months ago.

Lee said 95.7 bad loans was but a small portion of Globe Asiatique's 35,000 Pag-Ibig-funded home buyers in Pampanga alone. A 2.3 percent ratio of doubtful accounts, he noted, wasn't excited and was a normal ratio even when compared against the leading portfolio of banks.

Pag-Ibig had written Globe Asiatique last July 27, giving it 60 days to buy back 351 project accounts in its Nevera subdivision to cover for borrowers who wanted to renounce their contracts to sell.

An arrangement with the housing agency on the project required the company to provide a "two-year" buyback guarantee on covered loans.

"There are other developers with much bigger problems, why are we being singled out?" Lee said.

He noted that Pag-Ibig had never incurred any losses from handling any loans' collections. Even if it built houses and then the company has never had any project that was not finished on time.

Lee said his company had nothing to do with the alleged sale of housing units to ghost borrowers.

Noting that his company had been deputized by Pag-Ibig to accept documentary requirements and provide loan counseling to the borrowers, he said it was possible that some overeager agents may have been using fictitious generous rules.

"We're talking about 10,000 buyers here. I don't see all of these buyers personally. It's the documentary that we get on loans, particularly the membership application from Pag-Ibig," Lee said.

Nevera if indeed some eager broker or agent had used "ghost" borrowers behind his back, he said Globe cannot be transferred until the property is fully paid.

Every cancellation and substitution would only increase its additional cost to his company, he said.

"So I don't understand why this became a big deal as we're the ones losing money when we cancel the account," he said.

Did not borrow P7B

Lee clarified that his company was not borrowing money from Pag-Ibig to build houses. He said he has invested at least P1.5 billion for every project, which are funded through private bank loans.

He explained that Pag-Ibig funds to the buyer once who buy his homes.

The P7-billion loan referred to that Globe Asiatique is supposed to have borrowed from Pag-Ibig was the amount that the state housing agency lent to the borrowers who purchased the 35,000 homes that his company built.

"It's not like I borrowed P7 billion from the money and put it somewhere else," he said.

He said that the reason why the borrowers bought were all three and were each worth P650,000. The borrowing for each account is worth P750,000 each, of which P700,000 is released to Globe Asiatique for every housing unit sold.

Lahar ghost towns

He explained that he caters to a housing market that only Pag-Ibig is willing to lend money to. As such, about 60 percent of the company's housing loan sales are by buyers who borrow money from Pag-Ibig. The rest are either funded by in-house financing or, in some cases, bought for cash.

Before Globe Asiatique put up the Nevera projects in Rosales and Mabalacat, Lee said these lahar-devastated areas were like ghost towns.

But a very affordable monthly amortization of P5,000, he said Nevera home buyers live in a thriving community with swimming pool, a clubhouse and even its own Enchanted Kingdom-like theme park.

The Nevera project which started on September 2006 was finished in less than two years, he pointed out.

Globe Asiatique, with assets of about P35 billion, has some P8 billion worth of loans owed to commercial banks. While the company has been able to service last month's debt requirements, Lee said there's not enough cash inflow at present to cover payment requirements as the company has not been able to take out more loan proceeds from Pag-Ibig.

He said that because of the company's latest troubles, he may have to cut 700 jobs.

He may also have to cut back on the monthly subsidy that his company provides to the schools built in their housing communities.

Condos for Pag-Ibig board?

Meanwhile, Cavite Rep. Elpidio Barzaga Jr. yesterday asked the House of Representatives to expand its planned investigation into the Pag-Ibig housing loan scam to include officials, the former housing officials, including members of the Pag-Ibig board, had been given condominium units by Globe Asiatique.

In a statement, Barzaga said he had obtained information from undisclosed sources that a number of former Pag-Ibig executives were rewarded with residential units in the Gates 20-story GA Twin Towers on Edsa in Mandaluyong.

"If the allegation is true, then we have to find out how they finance housing officials acquired the properties, whether they got the money for free, or at a discount, or if they bought it themselves using their own money," said the lawmaker.

Barzaga, Majority Leader Neptali Gonzales II and Pampanga Rep. Aurelio Gonzales Jr. have filed separate resolutions seeking a congressional inquiry into the billion-peso loans supposedly granted to Globe Asiatique on behalf of thousands of housing borrowers, some of whom were allegedly later found not to be fictitious. With a report from Aika Rey and Cris Ubac

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Peso bond sale nets $1B

From page A1

as to the macroeconomic fundamentals of the country," Purisima was quoted as saying.

"We raised $1 billion worth [of bonds] in person, and the demand was for $13.3 billion."

11x oversubscribed

He meant that the bond offer was 13 times oversubscribed.

News of the peso bond offer, as well as developments at the Philippine Stock Exchange, perked up Mr. Aquino, who appeared to be enjoying relief from the recent hostage tragedy at Quirino Grandstand.

"Now can you not be elated by so many good news," Mr. Aquino said, referring in part to the recent record high close at the stock market.

He said developments on the economic front would cover the country well, as it would veer momentum attention away from the negative perception generated during the hostage crisis, whose eight Hong Kong tourists lost their lives in the gun.

Confidence

"The expectation primarily [is] that things are going to get better and that, perhaps, in a moments of the [people's] trust and confidence ... in our current administration," Mr. Aquino told reporters after viewing militants in Jolo.

Kary interviews at Jinagbay Point in Cavite.

Dichoso for the 10-year peso-denominated global bonds came from the United States, Europe and Asia, the finance department said.

Budget deficit

The Philippine bonds were also registered with the United States Securities and Exchange Commission, denominated in pesos but will be settled outside the country in US dollars.

Proceeds from the transaction to run of the peso global bonds will be used to curb the government's budget deficit and fund infrastructure projects.

The global bonds will mature in January 2021. The securities were priced at 99.607 percent of face value and was given a coupon of 4.95 percent.

If buyers were to hold on to the peso global bonds until maturity, they would earn 5 percent a year.

Currency fluctuation

Purisima said the cost of the borrowing was about a quarter less than what was expected.

The treasurer "is the latest development in the [country's] financing program in support of the government's proactive management of external liabilities, particularly with respect to reducing its vulnerability to foreign currency risks," he said.

The finance chief explained that the government wanted to lessen the adverse effects of currency exchange fluctuations to the country's outstanding debt by issuing more debt paper to peso sellers than in dollars.

Barclays Treasury Research & Trade said the peso-global bond would debut the government's debut investor profile while paving the way for greater participation by offshore investors in Philippine capital markets.

"Last week the transaction, or book-building, took about 30 hours, with 37.3 percent of the bonds going to buyers in Asia, 32.6 percent to those in the United States and 30.5 percent to those in Europe.

Citi group and Deutsche Bank acted as joint global coordinators for the transaction. The two banks also worked with Credit Suisse, Goldman Sachs (Asia), RBC Capital Markets as joint bookrunners.

Fitch Ratings assigned a "BB" rating to the Republic of the Philippines' benchmark peso-denominated global bonds.

The rating is in line with the Philippine sovereign's long-term foreign currency issuer default ratings (IDRs), which stands at BB+. The rating outlook is stable. With a report from AFP

P-Noy: Let us not jump to conclusions

From page A1

"Let us first determine [the results of the investigation] before we commit to something," Mr. Aquino said.

'Please, no speculation'

De Lima herself urged the public to wait for the official report of the investigating panel.

"We'd rather that the people wait for the report to come out. We are now drafting the report and we continue to evaluate the information that we have. Let's not engage in speculation. Let's wait for the conclusions to be reflected in the report," De Lima told the business by phone.

De Lima said she wanted it clarified that she did not categorically say that "friendly fire" may have killed the hostages, as reported by some media organizations from the interview.

"We are looking at all angles. We cannot rule out any of the possibilities at this point," she said.

De Lima was quoted in reports by some foreign news agencies, carried by BBC and CNN, as saying that "there is a big possibility [but there [was] friendly fire."

The quote was actually a question asked by a reporter during a press conference. "So there's a high possibility of friendly fire?" De Lima was asked. To which she replied: "There is always a possibility given the circumstances now."

De Lima then explained that bus driver Alberto Lubang's sentence and his connections of the shooting inside the bus can be supported by forensic results which also remained, as yet, inconclusive.

An appeal

Yesterday, De Lima told the business "Those present at (Thursday's) press briefing, many journalists, are aware of the fact that I did not refuse in any manner the possibility of friendly fire hitting the victims. My discourse was focused more on the discussion [on], were Lubang's testimony and forensic results."

"To this constrained to make this appeal for a more responsible reporting on what is an (investigating committee's) chair and sole spokesperson, share with the media in the spirit of transparency," she added.

De Lima said the panel would convene again on Monday to finalize its draft report and hold a closed-door meeting with a police forensic team and the National Bureau of Investigation.

"We hope we'll have the

READY, AIM President Aquino fires a Glock 9mm pistol during a target shooting simulation at the Fort Magsaysay firing range in Nueva Ecija. The President has vowed to improve the country's security measures after last month's botched hostage raid. AFP PHOTO

ballistics report ready by then," she said.

'Mystery woman'

Meanwhile, the "mystery woman" reportedly seen with Mendoza moments before he seized the husband of Gutierrez on Aug. 23 has admitted taking Mendoza to Manila from his home in Tanauan City.

But the woman, in an interview with the business, reluctantly denied the favor of Mendoza's plans on that fateful day saying he just asked her if he could use her car to return his service firearm.

The 45-year-old woman asked not to be identified so as to protect her and her family's privacy.

The woman maintained that she "did not purposely bring" Mendoza to Rizal Hospital because he was supposed to see senior his service firearm."

Executive session

Accompanied by her children, she showed up on Wednesday at a hearing of the De Lima committee.

Instead of grilling her publicly, De Lima said the committee had a closed-door executive session with the woman upon her request.

"(She was) crying reasons of privacy (and was) worried regarding the news about her," De Lima said.

The woman's lawyer said his client had given a sworn statement to the committee.

Family friend

The woman insisted earlier that she had no illicit affair with Mendoza. She said she was only "a very close friend" of Mendoza's, adding she was also close to his wife and children.

In fact, she said she drove Mendoza to Rizal Hospital from Tanauan to Rizal Park upon learning of the hostage drama.

The woman said that after dropping Mendoza in Manila, she got a call from him telling her that he had hijacked a tourist bus.

"I asked him why he did that, but he did not answer. I was worried. When I got home, I turned on the TV and I was shocked upon seeing that he had indeed seized a bus," the woman related.

"I never thought he would do that because he was a very kind person and a dedicated police officer."

Elite Army, Navy, Police units give Aquino a show

From page A1

In the cloud of smoke, bellowed commandos in bullet-proof vests stormed through the broken door. Others climbed through a window. Moments later, "hostages" scrambled out of the bus. Inside, the "hostage-taker" lay dead.

The "rescue operation" was seen as the highlight of Malacañan President Aquino watching an television instructory about 300 mayors assembled, suspended, maybe thinking that the Aug. 23 real-life hostage drama at Rizal Park could have been averted had other bloodshed if the police had been as efficient.

Mr. Aquino saw a demonstration of the capability of the Philippine National Police (PNP) Special Action Force (SAF) close-bay counter-terrorist unit, its Israeli counterpart Camp Raging Dove in Tagaig City on Thursday.

Saturday, he watched another "rescue operation," this time at sea, carried out by the Navy Special Operations Group (Navsog) at Sangley Point in Cavite.

Later, he witnessed a similar hostage-rescue exercise during a visit to Fort Magsaysay in Palayan City, Nueva Ecija.

Better equipment

The Cavite exercises simulated a situation where a gang of hijackers had seized a luxury yacht off Manila Bay and Navy teams, on rubber attack boats, stormed the yacht, disabused aboard and overpowered the gunmen.

"Sir," Mr. Aquino told reporters at Sangley Point when asked if he was satisfied with what he saw: "I think you have seen how capable our people are."

But he also said that the rescue teams should be given newer equipment to effectively derail such encounter crisis situations, like the Aug. 23 hostage drama in which eight Hong Kong tourists were killed after their bus was hijacked by dismissed police-man Rolando Mendoza. The hostage-taker was himself killed.

Wish list

"I'll be getting a lot of wish lists," Mr. Aquino said. "Yesterday from the SAF today from the Navy, later I guess from the Army."

"A lot of these items are not impossible to get. They should be given the necessary tools. The equipment they have is already too old. Don't send your soldiers to a fight without the needed tools."

Mr. Aquino has announced the formation of an elite unit composed of both military and police personnel who would be able to respond to crisis situations.

"The forces are there. It's really a question of merging operationally the organizations," he said.

Command structure

But while the Armed Forces and the PNP have to be distinct from each other, with the PNP remaining civilian in character, "there could be times that you would need all of them," he added.

He said the command structure of a joint military and police effort here was being worked out.

"I'm pretty happy with what he saw," the SAF head, Chief Supt. Catalino Cuy said after the Camp Raging Dove exercises. He added that Mr. Aquino even congratulated them.

Mr. Aquino later told reporters that he himself was fooled why SAF was not utilized during the Quirino Grandstand standoff.

SAF was actually also used in the rescue operation but it was Manila's Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) team that was at the forefront of the bungled operation.

Using explosives

"We used explosives to break the glass panels," Cuy said, explaining what happened during the SAF demonstration. He said the glass windows of the bus used in the exercises were made of the same material as those on the bus seized by Mendoza.

"We used enough explosives to break the glass in order for our team to gain access inside the bus and, at the same time, not hurt the hostages," Cuy added.

During the Rizal Park ordeal, Manila's SWAT took long, agonizing minutes before breaking into the tourist bus, as viewers on national and global television watched them pound its windows in frustration using a sledgehammer.

Needed for mobility

During Thursday's demonstration, the SAF used real people and mannequins for hostages.

Mr. Aquino also viewed an exhibit of the equipment SAF uses in battle.

Cuy said he took the opportunity to tell the President about the SAF's "wish list."

"I told him about the things we need for mobility, like helicopter, things like that ... He was very interested ... and he was also very supportive of what we will need to procure," Cuy said.

"We need a new generation or better model equipment to enable us [match] the status of the special police units of other countries." With a report from Inquirer Central Luzon

Emerald's 'siopao' only gainer in bostage crisis

From page A1

the farthest display [shelves] next [door] this side of Roxas Boulevard.

Instead, the upscale Chinese restaurant relies on word-of-mouth. "Let no one open [especially now], could one of the managers of the restaurant.

The restaurant served as the command post of President Aquino and Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim at the height of the August 23 hostage crisis, where they met, discussed and planned their course of action over dinner of fried rice, prawns and stir-fry noodles.

Since the hostage incident, where eight Hong Kong tourists were killed in a bus hijacking, the restaurant has been flooded, albeit one illegally, with the concern of public attention, drawing the curious and the hungry to its dining tables.

"People have been asking where the President was seated, or what they ate... There's been a lot of curiosity," said the manager who asked not to be identified.

"They say any publicity is good publicity but we don't really want publicity. We don't need it," she said.

Asado or bola-bola?

As evidence of the restaurant's rise to fame—or infamy—a thread in the popular online forum Pinoyexchange.com was dedicated to answering the question: "Why Emerald Restaurant?"

It drew dozens of responses.

Below reader SID_AK-DAVID-888 posted a picture of Mr. Aquino shown in deep discussion with the caption: "Asado o Bola-Bola? Bola-Bola o Asado? Misuay... Decisions, decisions."

Saimar, another reader, observed: "Siguro kung ala ako nakaupong restaurant ay gitnang-gitnang pwesto! [This is the first] issue of a restaurant being used as a command post."

Genefishing, for his part, wrote: "Biyahe talaga 'Pi (friend starter), siyempre Chinese ngayon-hostage days sa Chinese restaurant ni'to. Ano gusto ons sa Manila Hotel sila! 'Di sa a hotel. The hostages were Chinese, so they went to a Chinese restaurant. You want them to go to Barrio Fiesta?"

Good and cheap

A few commenters the questions seriously, including Papichulo 168, who said: "... they were just! Emerald because it was just a hop, skip and jump away from the (Lucio) Tan[dino] of case it turned out to be a successful rescue. Manila Hotel was very obvious. The other Roxas Blvd. restos were too close to the grandstand for comfort."

For the manager of Emerald Garden, the reason was simple: "[We serve] good, authentic Chinese food that's easy on the pocket," she said. "We cater to everyone, A, B, C and D."

The manager also said the 100-strong staff had been advised by top management not to give any more media interviews.

ABS-CBN's Aug. 31 interview with Cynthia Lazaro, another manager, was supposed to be the "first and last," she said.

Unexpected diner

The manager, who had requested anonymity, told the business that Mr. Aquino's visit was entirely unplanned and unexpected.

"Had we known, we would have rolled out the red carpet," she said.

The manager confirmed that Mr. Aquino arrived sometime between 8:30 p.m. and 9 p.m. to join Lim, who came before 7 p.m. Local Government Secretary Jesse Robredo and National Capital Region Police Office Chief Supt. Leocadio Santiago were already there, along with their escorts.

The second floor of the restaurant was cleared off to other customers, and a TV set was brought in as Aquino and company could monitor the events as they unfold.

"At first the TV would not work. They brought their own antenna, and it eventually worked," she said.

One added that cameras were strictly forbidden. "We could only peek from the sidelines."

Dim sum hour

Asked what the atmosphere was like, the manager declined to give details.

The question of whether or not the President enjoyed his plate was answered with a "No comment."

What about the bill?

"There's no way I can give you that detail," the manager said.

She did say that Lim was a frequent customer who dined at the restaurant almost daily.

Was he a pure veteran?

"No, he just likes to eat here. Maybe because it's cheap. Maybe Mayor Lim is also hot [not to lightheart]," she said in jest.

Unfortunately for Mr. Aquino, whose day 23 visit to the restaurant was his first, he never got a taste of Emerald Garden's signature siopao that night.

"We only serve dim sum from 8:30 a.m. till 2 p.m.," the manager said.

Pucay trails Singapore golf leader by 8

SINGAPORE—Wayne Allen Pucay shot a second straight 67 to join a big group at 10 under, eight shots behind leader Peter Kuruvilla after two rounds of the Nanda Singapore Classic on Friday. Kuruvilla fired a second straight 63 to grab a six-stroke lead at 18 under. Four players were at 12 under: Ben Tabios, Jaspreet Bhullar, Chan Yan-shin and Jbe Kruger. A shot back were SSP Chowrasia and the 2008 Angelo Que title, who were part of a 13-man group at Chandler Anthony Lascuna (68) placed a nine-way logjam at 9 under. Asian Tour News

Editor Teddyvic S. Melendres
Assistant Editor Francis T. J. Ochoa

SPORTS

US, Lithuania forge duel

KEVIN Durant (right) plays the hero's role for the US five. AFP

Americans trip Russians on anniversary of '72 tiff

ISTANBUL—Kevin Durant scored 34 points to help the United States beat Russia 89-79 on Thursday to move into the semifinals at the world championship.

It was the 38th anniversary of the Soviet Union's victory over the Americans for an Olympic gold medal, a game with such a controversial ending that the US players refused to accept their silver medals.

In 1972, the CIS came led by a point when officials ordered the final three seconds of the match be replayed. The Soviets scored in that time, causing the Americans to boycott the medal ceremony.

Durant made sure there would be no worries at the finish of this one, shooting 11 of 19 while just missing Carmelo Anthony's world championship mark record of 35 points set in 2006.

"We're going to go to him," US coach Mike Krzyzewski said. "I've learned in coaching you should get your best player the ball."

The US is now two wins from its first worlds title since 1994 and will play Lithuania on Saturday.

Lithuania advanced to the semifinals of the basketball world championship for the first time, hitting nine of its first 13 three-pointers Thursday to beat Argentina 104-85.

Linas Kleiza scored 16 points for Lithuania, which had seven players in double digits.

Lithuania forward Linas Kleiza scored 17 points, while guard Simas Delininkaitis and Darius had 16 each.

The defeat means Argentina won't finish in the top four at the worlds, Olympics or fifth American Championship for the first time since 2000.

No player on the young American team is old enough to remember that 1972 game—many are barely old enough to remember the Cold War. But Mike Bantom, the NBA's senior vice president of player development, played on that US team and is in Turkey with the Americans.

"I told him today, I know nothing's going to bring that back, sure, but at least we'll try to make you at least smile today," Dilfer said. "And he was like, 'Yeah, that'll be nice.'"

The US and Russia have met many times since 1972, including a US victory 20 years ago in Toronto that gave the Americans their last world championship. And there isn't much of a rivalry anymore between the nations—the NBA even opened an office in Moscow on Thursday. AP

Nadal ousts Verdasco, gains semis

NEW YORK—Top-ranked Rafael Nadal got his serve in gear after being broken for the only time in five matches to Fernando Verdasco, 7-5, 6-3, 6-4, Thursday night in the first all-Spanish quarterfinal in US Open history.

Nadal's streak of 62 consecutive holds of serve ended in Thursday's third game, when Verdasco broke him at love-40 ahead 2-1. Nadal wouldn't face another break point the rest of the match, though, and won the last 11 points he served in the second set.

Nadal is headed to a third consecutive semifinal at Flushing Meadows. He has never reached the finals in New York.

"Right now, for me, it's a very very nice feeling to be in (the) semifinals for the third time in a row for one of the most important tournaments in the world," Nadal said. "For me, probably right now, the most important."

As the way only going, Verdasco played the brand of point-extending, opponent-dispiriting defense that Nadal is so well-known for. But Nadal broke back to get to 4-all, thanks to Verdasco's consecutive double-faults, and suddenly was serving more and more comfortable.

The Spaniard will face 12th-seeded Mikhail Youzhny of Russia for a spot in the final. Youzhny beat No. 20 Stanislas Wawrinka of Switzerland, 3-6, 7-6 (7), 2-6, 6-2, 6-3, in four hours earlier Thursday. AP

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FREE WASH
A man cleans his pedicab using water gushing from a manhole along Del Pilar and Quirino Avenue in Manila. —RICARDO MARTIN

Bus robbers strike twice

Gang sticks up passengers with lightning speed

By Nina Calleja

ROBBERS struck twice yesterday in two separate instances in Mandaluyong City and Taytay, Rizal, divesting cash and valuables from passengers of two commuter buses.

Both robberies happened in less than two minutes, police said.

Supt. Cedino Reinoso, Taytay police chief, said four men "who looked like construction workers" flagged down a RRCG bus at around 11 a.m. while traveling on Manila East Road in Taytay.

Armed with handguns, two of the four suspects ordered the bus driver to pull over and the passengers to hand them all their belongings.

The two other suspects stood the lone in each before they fled with their companions on board a jeep van.

Half an hour later, another group of four armed men held up 28 passengers of a Quezon City-bound bus on Edsa, taking with them at least P10,000 in cash and valuables.

Senior Supt. Cesilo de Jesus, Mandaluyong City police chief, said the men announced the robbery immediately upon boarding a Philippine Cocoanut Inc. bus at the corner of Edsa and Reliance Street.

The robbers also carried a sack for their loot consisting of cell phones, wallets and the driver's daily earnings. It also took them just a minutes to get the job done.

Police are investigating if the robberies were connected, and added that the suspects could be members of the Sakay (sack) Gang.

"However, they could not be the same men. Mandaluyong is quite far from Taytay, and it would take more than 30 minutes to get here," he began said.

LRT's Lines 1, 2 operating hours shortened next week

By Paolo G. Montecillo

THE LIGHT Rail Transit (LRT) lines will close one hour earlier than the usual time starting Sept. 13 to allow the maintenance work of the mass transport system to do its work.

The LRT Authority (LRTA) announced late Thursday night that Lines 1 and 2 will return to their original operating schedules by Wednesday.

During weekdays, the last train from Line 1's Roosevelt station in Pasay City will leave at 9:30 p.m., while the last train from Baclaran in Quezon City departs at 10 p.m. The last trips

LRT'S A12

'War' between Taguig mayor, city council far from over

By Miko Morales

THE WARNING—steps of Taguig Mayor Sto. Lunio Cayetano and the city council, led by Vice Mayor Cesario Ellan, continued to hurl caustic bantered exchanges earlier this week, accusing each other of abusive practices.

Ellan deplored Cayetano's statements that politics was the reason behind the filing of a complaint against him before the Ombudsman last week.

Together with several councilors, Ellan filed a case against the mayor and city administrator Jose Luis Montales earlier for "harassment."

"We filed the cases against the mayor and her administrator so that they will not indulge in unethical move by the City Council, not because we are puppets of the Tuligas but because of what they are doing to us. Kidlat ng sa isa't isa sessions hall and even out of our offices without just cause is a clear case of harassment," Ellan said in a statement.

Former Junior Dante Tuliga, who lost to the May elections to Cayetano, is the father of former Mayor Freddie Tuliga.

Lawyer Jarwin Ing, the mayor's spokesperson, countered that the past administration, which Ellan was part of, appeared to cover up "anomalous multimillion deals" by deferring the issue of audit in the complaints.

"It's obvious that the audit being conducted is getting them headaches that's why they are this desperate," Ing said. "We expect a lot more of issues to be filed against us by the camp of the former mayor to disrupt [our investigation]."

Among the "questionable" projects the new administration is investigating are contracts involving garbage collection, information technology and even city arrangements, according to Ing. He said the audit was part of the reform agenda Cayetano promised during the elections.

Ing dismissed the complaint against the mayor as one meant to "force her to step down because of the audit."

But Ellan insisted that their case is "strong," arguing that their removal from the session hall on the second floor of the city hall was unjustified. He urged Mayor Cayetano to "wait for the issue in hand."

The complaint stemmed from the closure of the city council session hall last month, on Cayetano's order, saying it needed repair. Included in the order was the reorganization of the room allotted to councilors and implemented by Montales.

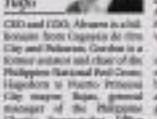
Ellan said they opposed the relocation because the area was where the councilors' ballots in the May mayoral race were stored.

In protest, the city council conducted their weekly sessions along the main hallway of city hall.

"This is not about partisan politics. We were booted out of our offices. We don't deserve this kind of treatment," said Councilor Michelle Gonzales.

Citing the local government code, Ellan maintained that it was the mayor's prerogative to implement any reorganization of the rooms.

I am back on radio to serve my fellowmen



ON TARGET
JOANNE FAJDO

AFTER five long years, my public service program, "Kumbong Ma Kay Tulfo," is back on radio, this time with dzIQ Radyo Inquirer (990 on your dial).

Radyo Inquirer was launched Thursday in simple ceremonies attended by its management and staff.

The station will become a big rival to the broadcast industry's senior franchise.

IQ 990 (our frequency on the AM band) anchors and staff have undergone a lot of training just in making Radyo Inquirer a big name in Philippine media.

"Kumbong" has come back with a vengeance. From a one-hour show when it went off the air in August 2006 as an early-morning radio public program, it now runs two hours.

Two long hours of serving the poor and the downtrodden, a cause of last resort.

The first hour will be devoted to helping the needy by bringing them to any of the government agencies who are specialists in various fields of medicine.

Also on the first portion of the program, I have called "Pasko sa Bayan Ilengkey Gulay, I will be receiving complaints from the public for inadequate services from government.

The second part of the program is titled, "Hatid ko Sa'o" (Were you oppressed?)

It will be devoted to giving aid to crime victims who seek justice but don't know where to go to.

From my long experience hearing grievances from the poor, most of the subjects of complaints are people in authority—policemen, traffic enforcers, barangay officials, teachers and employers, in the case of domestic help.

My dzIQ program, like before, will be a champion of the oppressed and the downtrodden.

With friends like the following: Bianca King, Jose "Pepito" Rivera, Cindy Gordon, Mr. Pentecostal "Joy" Tanada, Edward Fuggiden, Dr. James Yu, Dr. Bob Tiaoto and Dr. Bill Estacio, "Kumbong ma Kay Tulfo" will be able to help many sick indigents.

Ang si San Miguel Corp. is an also center on Antonio Abad, dean of the College of Law of Adamson University; Felipe R. Fragante, director of Jose Legal Aid of the Adamson University College of Law; lawyers Antonio Arnaiz and Amor Mendoza, to give free legal aid to poor people who are wrongly accused.

At this point, I would like to mention the invaluable help given to "Kumbong Ma Kay Tulfo" by Jaenick Tomas del Castillo and Arnel Clemente, who have gone back to our Creator.

Girl Castillo, legal counsel of the program, and Clemente gave free legal aid to many poor litigants who couldn't afford the services of brilliant lawyers like them.

I know my program will continue to have more supporters from the wealthy and intellectual society of society who believe in my cause.

Let me assure my supporters and followers of my show that the selfless I have no political agenda.

I believe in humble service. That what one does to his fellowmen will bounce back to him. I believe that what I am now is result of good karma.

Walk and run events kick off bye to breast cancer drive

By Tina G. Santos

HOPE HILL a step are you willing to take to help win the fight against breast cancer?

For nonbreast cancer advocates, it's stepping out of bed to walk or run to raise awareness and funds to support the crusade against the number one killer disease among women.

For the past several years now, beauty company Avon, the largest corporate advocate of breast cancer campaigns in the world, has continuously created ways for Filipinos to become part of the fight to save lives and help provide access to care and support for medically underserved women.

"The cause that's closest to our hearts is the breast cancer crusade. Why? Simply because, thousands of women world-wide succumb to the disease every year," said Mike Gudgin, Avon Philippines president and general manager.

Breast cancer statistics support a serious health issue. The Philippine Cancer Registry lists more than 10,000 cases with a mortality rate of 40 per cent, and the numbers go up annually.

The Philippine Cancer Society recently declared breast cancer as first on 1 cancer in the Philippines, which has consistently now holds the highest incidence rate of breast cancer in the Asian region and is considered to have the ninth highest incidence rate in the world.

Gudgin underlined the company's commitment to contribute in the advocacy by saying that Avon has raised and donated $6mil. million globally to fund research and support women services with breast cancer.

In the country, BCRC has already achieved a number of major feats in the continuing fight against the life-threatening disease.

These include the establishment of the Philippine General Hospital Breast Care Center, where a mammographic unit, which was fully funded, the treatment of indigents, initiated a support group and conducted regular gatherings for survivors and survivors, and provided much-needed equipment to provincial government hospitals.

This year's BCRC event, dubbed as "Step Out Against Breast Cancer," is set to five different locations nationwide for three consecutive Sundays next month.

The walk events will be held on Oct. 2 at SM MOA Open Grounds and SM Sucat, Oct. 16 at Avon Cagayan de Oro and SM Lucena, and Oct. 17 at SM Baguio, while run events will be on Oct. 3 at SM MOA Open Grounds, Oct. 10 at Avon Cagayan de Oro.

To join the walk events, one simply has to purchase the Limited Edition BCRC shirt for P349. Twenty pesos from each shirt sold will be given to the PGH Breast Care Center and selected provincial hospitals.

The b'lieh run events, a new component of the campaign, targets the deadly growing community of runners in the country. Registration fee is P500.

Another way to support the cause is by purchasing the Avon Naturals White Lily and Kiwi Fruit and Soda Lotion for P399. Five pesos from each bottle of lotion sold is earmarked for the BCRC fund drive.

"Whether one chooses to run, walk or buy the fundraising product, their participation can make a significant contribution to the fight against breast cancer," said Beth Asuncion, Avon Philippines' head of communications.

Plastic bag holiday proposed for Quezon City

By Julie M. Aurelio

A QUEZON City councilor has proposed the setting aside of a "plastic bag holiday" or a whole day ban on plastic bags every first and last Friday of the month in the city.

In his proposal, Councilor Dorothy Delarmente is pushing for the regulation of the use of plastic bags and the imposition of environmental fees when these are used.

According to the proposal, no plastic bags will be provided at checkout counter counters of stores on the first and last Fridays of the month.

"It is the duty of the city government to protect the natural environment, the economy and health of its citizens," the proposal read.

Delarmente said she filed the proposal because of the large volume of waste, including plastic bags, that are being dumped at the Payatas Disposal Facility.

Around 1,250 tons of waste are dumped at the waste facility every day, according to data from the Quezon City Environmental Protection and Waste Management Department.

An estimated 2.9% or 264,398 kgs of the waste materials were assorted plastic materials, while 22% or 15 15,000 kgs/day were composed of plastic bags.

Delarmente noted that plastic bags constitute largely to the huge volume of garbage collected and brought to the dump daily.

Plastic bags also clog canals and sewage systems, resulting to floods, she added.

The proposal also requires stores to put up its own "no bags anyone" or endless values consumers are bring their used plastic bags.

The stores can bring the accumulated used plastic bags to the waste markets provided by the city government or sell these directly to recycling shops.

A tax credit will be given to retailers with a significantly reduced plastic bag consumption, of at least 10% of the total consumption.

Delarmente also sought the imposition of a P1,000 fine for the first offense, P5,000 for the second offense and the cancellation of the store's business permit on the third offense.

LRT's Lines 1, 2 operating hours ...

From page A21

will leave half an hour earlier during Saturdays and Sundays.

Likewise, the last Line 2 train from Santolan in Marikina City will leave at 9:30 p.m., while the last 2D from Recto avenue in Manila leaves at 10 p.m. The same schedule will be followed during weekends.

"If the current schedule, there's not enough time to do maintenance work on the trains and other LRT facilities," the LRT said.

LRT operations were extended last March 4, following the clamor for longer hours from commuters. Both LRT Lines 1 and 2 serve train passengers from the northern belt and business in the heart of Metro Manila.

Line 1 runs along Taft and Rizal Avenues through the cities of Pasay and Manila. It also covers along Edsa in Caloocan City and Quezon City.

Line 2, meanwhile, runs from Manila to Marikina along Aurora Boulevard.

Half a million people use the LRT Line 1 every day. The remaining's civilian and more need train operators. It has a daily ridership of over 700,000 passengers.

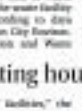
The newer Line 2 carries close to 250,000 passengers a day.

Parents seek help for son who needs surgery

By Santiago R. Alvarizas

ONE-YEAR-OLD Santino Bagtas' family needs open heart surgery to save him from the first complications of pneumonia and other related illnesses.

His father, Pedrito Bagtas Jr., told Inquirer that he thought the medicines Santino had been taking after doctors found out that he had a congenital heart disease 23 days after birth, would prevent the kids to



SANTINO

his heart from getting any bigger.

"In fact, he is more active now. Catholic gave advised to be ready with the money for the surgery," Bagtas said.

Upon hearing he need his parents, Jennylyn Sotta, brought their son to the Philippine General Hospital because he showed signs that he had pneumonia.

"He had colds and he was coughing a lot. Then he started yellowish in skin," he said.

The former surgery drives from the Gen. Mariano Alvarez hospital in Barangay Sta. Cruz, Manila to Marikina along Aurora Boulevard.

Half a million people use the LRT Line 1 every day. The remaining's civilian and more need train operators. It has a daily ridership of over 700,000 passengers.

The newer Line 2 carries close to 250,000 passengers a day.

HYGIENE KITS, WATER FOR NAVOTAS FIRE VICTIMS

Some 1,134 hygiene kits were distributed to families displaced by the six-hour fire that recently hit a coastal neighborhood in Navotas City by Smart Communications Inc. through its Community Care program and in partnership with the PLDT-Smart Foundation and the city government. The kits were distributed to families staying in evacuation centers at the Navotas Sports Complex, North Bay Boulevard North, Kapitbahayan, and North Bay Boulevard South. Smart's clear company Magsilat Water Services Inc. also distributed bottled water to the evacuees. From left: Smart area manager-North NCR Guido Garcia and Magsilat corporate social responsibility supervisor Ramon Tesoro with Navotas Mayor John Rey Tiangco.

Issue over agency vehicles leads to row among MMDA officers

By Tina G. Santos

METROPOLITAN Manila Development Authority (MMDA) chair Francis Tolentino has ordered an investigation into a dispute among his consultants that allegedly almost led to a shooting last Wednesday.

"We will investigate the matter," MMDA spokesperson Fred Gonzales said in a text message to Inquirer.

But an MMDA officer denied that there was a shooting incident, adding that the matter had been settled.

According to a source, the shooting nearly transpired following a verbal altercation between Rev. Gen. Emilio Gaminde, supervising consultant at the MMDA Traffic and Transport Management Office (TTMO) and a certain Pelicarpio, who was assigned at the office of another MMDA consultant, Roberto "Bobby" Quijano.

Gaminde allegedly confiscated Pelicarpio over the use of vehicles impounded by the agency, the source said.

As the height of the arguments, Gaminde allegedly pointed his cocoa at the chest, prompting another close aide of Inquirer to come to Pelicarpio's aid by drawing his gun and pulling it at Gaminde, the source added. The cars were parallel only when coded heads interfered.

But Sen. Col. Bel Bayangos, another TTMO consultant who admitted he was around during the "confrontation" between Gaminde and Pelicarpio, said there no gun using any physical violence transpired.

"Emotions were high, voices were raised, that's all. The information that reached you was exaggerated," he said.

Bayangos also explained that Gaminde confronted Pelicarpio not over impounded vehicles but over a night patrol vehicle that Inquirer's office had reportedly borrowed from TTMO.

"We have been using the mobile night patrol for our operations, but the vehicle had been with them for several days already, so General Gaminde was asking if we can return it," he said.

"The dispute is over. Maybe it was just a misunderstanding. All's well now," Bayangos added.

Suicide car bombing in southern Russia kills 17

BOSTON OBLOM, RUSSIA—Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin blamed extremists "without souls, without honor" for a suicide car bombing that killed 17 people on Thursday in the North Caucasus region.

It was the fourth terrorist attack in the area in a decade, and while no one claimed responsibility, the Kremlin has been trying to contain Islamic militancy in the mountainous southern region of Russia.

Nearly 140 were wounded in the bombing in Vladikavkaz, the capital of North Ossetia, with about a half-dozen hospitalized in very serious condition.

Putin met with Russia's top Muslim cleric after the blast and said Russia's estimated 20 million Muslims should play a key role in eradicating Islamic extremism in the nation.

"The crimes like the one that was committed in the North Caucasus today are aimed at sowing enmity between ethnic groups and people's offense," Putin said in televised remarks at the meeting.

The bomber drove in the suicide's auto-entrance and detonated the explosives, the Emergency Situations Ministry said. The blast tore the car in half, littered the market square with charred bits and blew out windows in nearby buildings, according to nationally broadcast video that also showed charred body parts—presumably those of the bomber—blackened stains on the pavement and torn pieces of nearby vehicles.

The bomber was identified as a resident of neighboring Ingushetia, the independent Kavkazsky Uzel website reported, quoting an unidentified official.

The death toll included the bomber, and of the 130 people wounded in the explosion were hospitalized, and Alexander Degtevsky of the Emergency Situations Ministry. The RIA Novosti news agency said six ethnic Russians were among the wounded.

There suspected accomplices of the bomber were detained, federal security chief Alexander Bortnikov said in televised remarks.

Putin blamed the violence on "people without souls, without honor. They literally hold nothing sacred. Our common duty is to fight these crimes, these criminals."

The attack came as Muslims prepared for the feast that celebrates the end of the holy month of Ramadan.

Unlike the provinces of Chechnya, Ingushetia and Dagestan, where Muslims make up most of the population, North Ossetia is predominantly Orthodox Christian. It has been decimated by long-simmering tensions between ethnic Ossetians and ethnic Ingush that exploded into open fighting in 1992.

President Dmitri Medvedev condemned the attack and said it underscores the resolution of Washington and Moscow to cooperate in fighting terrorism.

"Our bonds go out to the people of North Ossetia, who have already suffered so much from horrific acts of terrorism," he said in a statement.

Russian President Dmitry Medvedev immediately sent his regional envoy to Vladikavkaz to help coordinate efforts to help the victims. He urged investigators to "do everything to track down the bombs, the bodies who conducted this terror attack."

The regional president of Ingushetia, Yunus-Bek Yevkurov, quickly sent condolences to the leader of North Ossetia to help assuage tensions between the two ethnic groups.

It was the deadliest attack in the region since a double suicide bombing killed 12 in November by Dagestan in April. Twin suicide bombings on Moscow subway in March killed 40 people and wounded over 100.

Russia's ethnically diverse North Caucasus region has been gripped by violence stemming from two separatist wars in Chechnya and clashes by rebels in poverty and rampant official corruption. Human rights groups say law enforcement officers frequently resort to extrajudicial killings, kidnappings and torture, breeding hostility and provoking retaliatory attacks.

The Vladikavkaz bomber site has been the target of several bomb attacks in the past dozen years in which scores of people have died. A 1999 bombing killed 55 people. Another explosion in 2000 killed six. AP

12 US soldiers charged with murder of Afghan civilians

WASHINGTON—Twelve US soldiers have been charged with gruesome crimes in Afghanistan ranging from murdering civilians to keeping body parts as war trophies, revealing that the Pentagon said on Thursday damaged America's image around the world.

The infantry soldiers from the 5th Stryker Brigade based in Washington state deployed to Kandahar province a year ago and the months occurred between January and March, according to charges the Army prosecutors made public this week.

"Allegations like this are ... very serious," Pentagon Press Secretary Geoff Morrell told a news briefing.

"Clearly, even if these allegations are proved to be untrue, it is deplorable. It does not help the perceptions of our forces around the world."

Morrell declined to comment on the specifics of the charges because the case is still in the military justice system.

Five soldiers were charged in June with the murder of three Afghan civilians in Kandahar province.

But new charges disclosed to the media on Wednesday show seven others have also been charged in the case and face accusations that include conspiracy to cover up the crime.

An Army spokesperson said four of the soldiers have been charged for keeping body parts, which included finger bones and a skull include leg bones and a human tooth. It was unclear where the remains had come from based on the charge sheets.

Morrell said the allegations had yet to be proven, but were "serious considering."

"They are, I think you all would agree, an aberration in terms of the behavior of our forces, if true, around the world," he said. Reuters

A PALESTINIAN worshipper prays during Eid al-Fitr prayers, which marks the end of the holy fasting month of Ramadan, at the border of Gaza Strip, the eighth Gaza Muslims' breach, at the city of Mashtoul, about 150 km northeast of the capital Tehran, Iran, on Sept. 10. AFP

Dissidents claim Iran building a new secret enrichment site

WASHINGTON—A dissident group that had previously revealed the existence of several hidden nuclear sites in Iran claimed on Thursday that it had evidence that the country was building another secret uranium enrichment plant.

The group, the People's Mujahedeen of Iran, showed satellite photographs of an excavation zoned digging operation near a military garrison northeast of Tehran. But the group had no pictures of the interior and no evidence to back up its claim that the site was intended to hold secret thousand centrifuges, the machines used to enrich nuclear fuel for power production or weapons. The Obama administration, which publicly revealed evidence a year ago of a hidden nuclear facility near the holy city of Qom, reserved cautiously to the group's announcement.

In recent months officials have said they had no evidence of another enrichment facility, though they have expressed suspicions about a number of deep tunnels built into hillsides or mountains. One US government official said the evidence from the People's Mujahedeen, which was turned over to American officials this week, would require careful examination.

A new enrichment plant, if it exists, would heighten suspicions that Iran was trying to evade international inspectors and find another way to produce fuel usable in a bomb. But there are other possible explanations for an underground facility including a location to store conventional weapons.

The strife between the group, Iran a long and tense history with the US government, and it has openly called for a change of government in Iran. But it recently revealed the existence of the country's main underground nuclear enrichment facility, at Natanz, and the facility at Qum, which is still under construction. Both are now visited regularly by international nuclear inspectors.

Some other allegations from the group, two American officials noted on Thursday "haven't proven as accurate." AFP

Study: Flamboyant male dancing attracts women best

LONDON—John Travolta was onto something. Women are most attracted to male dancers who have big, flamboyant moves similar to the actor's trademark style, British scientists say in a new study.

Rob McCarty and colleagues at Northumbria University and the University of Groningen in Germany asked 29 men aged 18 to 28 to observe six professional dancers to dance in a laboratory for one minute to a basic drum rhythm. They filmed the men's movements with a dozen cameras, and then turned those movements into computer-generated avatars so the study could focus on moves, not appearances.

Scientists then showed the dancing avatars to 37 women, who rated their skills on a scale of 1 to 7. According to the women, the best dancers were those who had a wide range of dance moves and focused on the head, neck and torso.

The research was published this month in the journal Biology Letters, a publication of Britain's Royal Society. It was paid for by Northumbria University.

"Surprisingly, it is possible to break down the motion patterns that are informative and to identify exactly what happens in modern dance clubs.

"There are lots of cues humans use when choosing a mate, like a peacock pulling out its tail," he said. "Dancing for humans could signal whether a male is fit because it requires the expenditure of a lot of energy." AP

Deal discussed in Detroit plane attack, says defense

DETROIT—Lawyers for a Nigerian man charged with trying to blow up a plane near Detroit on Christmas said on Thursday that they've talked to prosecutors about resolving the case with a deal.

The disclosure was made in a court filing seeking a new deadline to challenge evidence against Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, who is accused of trying to set off a bomb hidden in his underwear aboard a flight from Amsterdam to Detroit last year with nearly 300 people aboard.

The deadline to file motions is Friday. Abdulmutallab is due to defend court on Monday for a pretrial hearing.

In the court filing, defense lawyers said they've met with prosecutors on "multiple occasions, by phone and in person, to explore options for resolution of this case." They said prosecutors are opposed to extending Friday's motion deadline.

Abdulmutallab's lead attorney, Miriam Siefer, declined to comment about the filing. The US attorney's office also declined to comment.

The government has said Abdulmutallab has cooperated with investigators since his arrest on Dec. 25. He has been described as a young convert to al-Qaeda's nascent terrorist branch in Yemen.

Abdulmutallab is charged with trying to use a weapon of mass destruction, which carries a sentence of life in prison. Passengers aboard the plane pounced on him and put out the fire he had dropped from under front of the jet where he was subdued.

Any plea deal, particularly one that allows Abdulmutallab to get out of prison at some point, could force the Obama administration back into a debate about whether terrorism cases should be handled in military tribunals, where the rules of evidence are more favorable to the government and defendants have fewer rights than in US courts.

The government's opposition to a new deadline could signal that plea bargain talks have stalled, said Alan Gershel, former head of the criminal division in the US attorney's office.

"It's possible the government doesn't want to drag this out," said Gershel, who teaches at Thomas M. Cooley Law School in suburban Detroit. "The crime happened at Christmastime. We're eight or nine months later. By opposing this, they're saying, 'We're going to wrap this up or not.'" AP, Reuters

ABDULMUTALLAB

US Diocese Judge Nancy Edmunds will grant the defense team's request. AP

Author quits bank post amid outcry in Germany

STUTTGART, GERMANY—Heading off a potentially embarrassing court fight, Germany's central bank announced on Thursday that it had agreed to part ways on amicable terms with Thilo Sarrazin, the author of a recently released book on immigration that created a storm there by accusing Muslims of refusing to integrate and of "dumbing down" German society.

The Bundesbank released a statement late Thursday saying that Sarrazin had asked Germany's president, Christian Wulff, to remove him from the bank's board by the end of this month. In a television interview Sarrazin acknowledged that he was moving in to intense political pressure after the board asked for his removal and his own Social Democratic Party moved to kick him out.

Speaking on German television about the pressure brought to bear, he said, "At the long haul, nobody will need it."

Sarrazin's request headed off a potentially embarrassing clash between the views of the nation's political leadership, which condemned his opinions as xenophobic and anti-Muslim, and those of a wide section of the public who endorsed his ideas, or at least felt he had rightly opened a debate on a taboo subject.

The bank said in a statement that the president's spokesperson, Olaf Glaseker, had said the president "welcomes the friendly settlement with the German Bundesbank." The bank had asked the president to free Sarrazin, saying he had understood its reputation and credibility, but it was not clear that the courts would have ultimately endorsed such an action as legal.

Sarrazin drew widespread official condemnation a week ago after the release of the book, "Germany Does Away With Itself," which castigated the state for its welfare policies and accused Muslim immigrants of undermining Germany's future by failing to learn German or educate their children properly.

Advocates for immigrants said Sarrazin's analysis ignored the inadequacy of Germany's efforts to help immigrants to integrate, and widespread discrimination that locked generations into cycles of unemployment.

The political leadership, including Chancellor Angela Merkel, quickly and sharply condemned Sarrazin, even while it became clear that he had struck a chord with the public. His book has sold briskly, and even his critics have acknowledged that he has hereof an important public discussion on immigration.

Appearing on German television Thursday night, Sigmar Gabriel, chair of the Social Democrats, said that although Sarrazin had described many things that were accurate, in the end he came to conclusions that "don't fit into the ideals of Social Democracy anymore."

Thea Dorn, an author and philosopher, said on ZDF television that "you can read his book as a chronicle of desperation of a liberal Democrat who reached the edge of his own desperation."

On Thursday, as his resignation was being announced, Sarrazin was observed by an audience of about 700 as he read his book in Potsdam.

Sarrazin has remained unrepentant, but has said that he regretted having made comments about Arabs that distracted from his core topic. In a newspaper interview published the day before his book's release, he spoke of a Jewish gene, a reference to research studies showing that Jews share many genes inherited from the ancestral population that lived in the Middle East long ago. But talk of Jews and genetic predispositions aroused an instable line in Germany.

Even Sarrazin's supporters said that he had undermined himself with his comment about Jews. His critics said the remark had revealed his true colors. AFP

The WORLD

Editor: Lawrence B. Greco

Visible rebuilding at NY Sept. 11 site

NEW YORK—Nine years after the Sept. 11 attacks, visible progress is finally being made toward rebuilding the World Trade Center site known as Ground Zero.

Delays from political, security and financing concerns have dominated the public image of the roughly $11-billion project in the absence of a gleaming new skyscraper or memorial to those who died when al-Qaeda hijackers destroyed the Twin Towers.

But while rapid, visible progress has been made since the last anniversary of the attacks, that has captured little attention. Instead, the citizens about Ground Zero has shifted to talk to concerns, such as the proposed Islamic cultural center to be built two blocks from the site. (See sidebar.)

Two of four planned office towers are heading skyward. The signature One World Trade Center—formerly called the Freedom Tower—is nearly 60 stories tall, on its way to 104 stories or antenna that will reach 541 meters (1,776 feet), making it the tallest building in the United States upon completion, expected by 2013.

A memorial to the nearly 3,000 killed when al-Qaida hijackers crashed commercial planes into the Twin Towers, the Pentagon outside Washington, DC, and a Pennsylvania field is on schedule to open a year from now—on the 10th anniversary when originally the entire massive complex was to have been completed.

Press elevated vantage points, the emblem of the new reflecting pools, can mistaking each footprint of the two towers, can now be seen.

The project is exceedingly complex with a transportation hub, and a performing arts center, all being built on top of underway much construction still does.

"This is one gigantic game of pick-up sticks. Every single thing that you see around here touches another part of the project," said Chris Ward, executive director for Port Authority, which is building one of the towers.

"The schedules we had early on were almost aesthetical schedules or political schedules. People wanted to feel like downtown was going to get rebuilt quickly," Ward told Reuters at Ground Zero, now a teeming construction site.

The Port Authority is building One World Trade Center and developer Larry Silverstein is building three skyscrapers, two of which will only proceed above their lease if there is market demand for office space.

"Some of the anxiety and angst over the plan for a mosque near Ground Zero is fueled by the lack of completion of the 9/11 memorial, and to some extent the fact that (al-Qaida leader Osama) bin Laden is still at large," said Richard Hackett, director of counselling and professor of psychology at New York's Pace University.

"I physical interested in a sacred place where people can honor their losses, I believe, would help quell the pain experienced right now," Hackett said.

The teams who is leading the proposed Islamic center to be built near Ground Zero, Faisal Abdul Rauf, told CNN on Wednesday he failed to anticipate this outpouring of protest over the project.

"If I knew that this would happen, this would go in this kind of pain, I wouldn't have dreamt," Rauf said.

But he rejected pressure to abandon or move the project, saying it would harm US security.

"If we move from that location, the story will be that the radicals have taken over the discourse. The headline in the Muslim world will be that Islam is under attack," Rauf said.

"If we do move, it will strengthen the arguments of the radicals to recruit, their ability to recruit, and their increasing aggression, violence, against our country."

Mayor Michael Bloomberg and the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, which owns the site, permits the memorial plans—but not the museum—will be completed by Sept. 11, 2011.

"We understand the pressure and the importance of making sure that when the world gathers here on the 10th anniversary, the robots [plaza] will be completed," Ward said. Reuters

CONSTRUCTION crews work on Sept. 9 at the site of the World Trade Center in New York City's preparations for the ninth anniversary of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

Backers of New York Muslim center project appear divided, regretful

NEW YORK—The backers of a proposed Islamic center near Ground Zero are expressing regrets about creating a firestorm with a plan they thought would be simple and non-controversial.

Michael Blumenfeld, an Egyptian-born lawyer who says he provided a majority of the financing to gain control over the two buildings where the center would be built, told The Associated Press that he had always viewed the project primarily as an investment opportunity, and would sell some of the site if the price was right.

And the issues slated to lead the spiritual component of the center told CNN that if he had realized how some Americans would react to the location, he would have picked some other spot.

"If I knew this would happen, if I knew it would cause this kind of pain, I wouldn't have done it," Feisal Abdul Rauf said.

Both men, though, said they strongly supported the center going forward. Rauf said moving it now would create the perception that "Islam is under attack" in America and would strengthen the ability of radicals to attract recruits.

The challenges facing the project extend far beyond the debate over its location, and include conflicting interests among the key backers.

Elkinaty said that while he supported the building of a 13-story Islamic center at the property he helped buy, he intended to retain a piece for himself.

He said one of the buildings was worth millions of dollars if it was redeveloped, and he intended to exist the opportunity. He said he would like to see the other building turned into a mosque, but if backers didn't want to partner with him, he would be free to break away, he would expect even to someone else.

"This is business. This was a great business transaction for me," said Elkinaty, a US citizen who has lived on New York's Long Island for decades, owns medical clinics in New York City and invests in real estate on the side.

Representatives of some of the project's backers said they have just started trying to raise the estimated $100 million needed to build the center and the additional more required to open.

Elkinaty said his real estate partnership, which paid $4.6 million for both the site last year, had already received offers of three times that to sell that parcel.

"Develop it, case it, sell it," he said. "If someone wants to give me $30 or $20 million today, it's all theirs."

If that happened, an Islamic center could still be built at the site, but at half the size.

A spokesperson for the developer leading the investment team declined to confirm Elkinaty's claim that he has a majority stake in the partnership, or to comment on whether he needs approval from the rest of the group to divide the three of the two buildings.

New York Gov. David Paterson, who has voted four times to endorse the Islamic center's backers to move to a new location, told an WOR-AM radio on Thursday that he appreciated Rauf's acknowledgment that ordinary people, and not just bigots, had been upset by the plan.

"I do feel the slightest bit of movement," he said.

The concept of the center was first broached publicly two year ago by a group of leaders that included Rauf, his wife and a real estate investor in Rauf's congregation, Sharif El-Gamal.

Together, they outlined a plan to demolish a pair of linked buildings and replace them with a center that would build a theater, a health club, a performing arts center, a culinary school and a mosque. AP

US was slow in dealing with domestic radicals

WASHINGTON—The US was slow to take seriously the threat posed by homegrown militants and the government has failed to put systems in place to deal with the growing phenomenon, according to a new report compiled by the former heads of the Sept. 11 Commission.

The report says US authorities failed to realize that Somali-American youths traveling from Minnesota to Mogadishu in 2008 to join extremists was not an isolated issue. Instead, the movement was one among several instances of a broader, more diverse threat that has surfaced across the country.

"The long-held belief that homegrown terrorists couldn't happen here has thus created a situation where we are today stumbling blindly through the legal, operational and organizational minefield of countering terrorist radicalization and recruitment in the United States," said the report, which was obtained by The Associated Press.

At a result, there is still no federal agency specifically charged with identifying individuals and working to prevent homegrown radicalization, the report, slated to be released on Friday by the Washington-based Bipartisan Policy Center's National Security Preparedness Group.

The group, headed by former 9/11 commission leaders Tom Kean and Lee Hamilton, laid out a detailed description of domestic terror incidents ranging from the Fort Hood, Texas, shooting spree and the attempted Christmas Day airliner attack in late 2009 to last May's botched truck bombing in New York's Times Square.

Over the past year, terrorism experts and government officials have warned of the threat posed by homegrown radicals, saying street savants who get abroad could return to the US to carry out attacks.

But the US, the group said, should have learned earlier from Britain's experience. Prior to the 2005 London suicide bombings, the British believed that Muslims there were better integrated, educated and wealthier than their counterparts elsewhere.

Similarly, the US believed that its melting pot of nationalities and religions would protect it from internal radical strife, the report said.

The terrorists, said the report, may have discovered America's "Achilles' heel in that we currently have no strategy to counter the type of threat posed by homegrown terrorists and other radicalized recruits."

US officials have acknowledged the need to address the radicalization problem, and for the first time, the White House this year added combating homegrown terrorism to its national security strategy. The plan includes a "new interagency effort that brings together key stakeholders" and continued "outreach to communities across the country," said Brea Rhodes, the White House's deputy national security advisor.

The FBI, meanwhile, has worked to reach out to the Somali communities, in an effort to counter the radicalization of the youth. AP

FANTASTIC SOLAR SHOW

Image provided by Nasa shows a solar flare jets as meager 11:01 was turning away from Earth on Sept. 8. The active region erupted, producing a solar flare and a fantastic prominence. The eruption also hurled a bright coronal mass ejection into space. The erupt ion was not directed toward any planets.

US judge strikes down military's 'don't ask, don't tell' rule

THE "DON'T ask, don't tell" policy toward gay members of the military is unconstitutional, a federal judge in California ruled on Thursday.

US District Judge Virginia A. Phillips of the Central District of California struck down the rule in an opinion issued late in the day. The policy was signed into law in 1993 as a compromise that would allow gay and lesbian soldiers to serve in the military.

The rule limits the military's ability to ask about the sexual orientation of service members, and allows homosexuals to serve as long as they do not disclose their homosexuality and do not engage in homosexual acts.

The plaintiffs challenged the law under the Fifth and First Amendments to the Constitution, and Phillips agreed.

"The Don't Ask, Don't Tell Act and its progeny violate the fundamental rights of United States service members in many ways," the wrote. "In order to justify the unconstitutional on these rights, defendants faced the burden at trial to show that Don't Ask, Don't Tell Act was necessary to significantly further the government's important interests in military readiness and unit cohesion. Defendants failed to meet that burden."

The rule, she wrote in an 86-page opinion, does not promote military readiness—and, in fact, has a "direct and deleterious effect" on the armed services.

The decision is among a number of recent legal rulings that have suggested a growing judicial skepticism about measures that discriminate against homosexuals, including rulings against California's ban on same-sex marriage and a Massachusetts decision striking down a federal law barring the federal government from recognizing same-sex marriage.

The decision will not change the policy right away; the judge called for the plaintiffs to submit a proposed injunction limiting the law by Sept. 16, and he ordered defendants to submit their objections to the plan a week after that. A decision would follow, and even that would likely be stayed pending appeals.

The suit was brought by Log Cabin Republicans, a conservative gay organization. The group's executive director, R. Clarke Cooper, pronounced himself "delighted" with the ruling, which he called "not just a win for Log Cabin Republicans or service members, but all Americans service members."

Dan Woods, lead attorney for the plaintiffs, said the decision was "a major victory in the fight for equality and means that military service will be available to all Americans, regardless of their sexual orientation." AFP

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Editor Raul G. Marcelo • Assistant Editor Corrie S. Mariano

BUSINESS

Low interest rates to stay till end-2010

ECONOMIC BLUEPRINT

Economic Planning Secretary Cayetano Paderanga Jr. presented the government's economic blueprint for the next six years at the recent Philippine Mid-Year Economic Briefing at Dusit Thani Hotel. Paderanga said the government aims to create adequate employment opportunities for more Filipinos to significantly reduce poverty. And he says the inclusive growth it envisions, measured by a growth of 6-7 percent this year and 7-8 percent from 2011 to 2016, is more than twice the rate of growth recorded in the last 10 years. The government expects economic growth of 5.6 percent this year and forecasts an expansion of 7.3 percent from 2011 to 2016. Recent data showed that the first half of 2010 posted a 7.9 percent GDP growth, the highest in 20 years.

Citigroup research paper sees no inflationary threat in near term

By Michelle F. Baroo

CITIGROUP EXPECTS interest rates to remain low in the fourth quarter, saying there was no reason at the moment to expect higher cost of borrowings in the increase in consumer prices were still modest.

The investment bank said the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas was likely to keep its key policy rates at historic lows, thus influencing banks to maintain record-low interest rates on loan savings by consumers and businesses.

The BSP will likely feel the need to raise interest rates only in the first quarter of 2011, Citigroup said in its latest research paper on the Philippines.

It said the central bank has the flexibility to keep interest rates benign and supportive of economic growth prospects at the moment because there were no significant inflationary threats in the near horizon.

The overnight borrowing and lending rates of the BSP stand at 4 and 6 percent and these historic low levels have been prevailing since July 2009.

Some economists have argued that the global economy's recovery from last year's recession should prompt central banks to raise their interest rates after having brought them down to record low levels. They said having low interest rates for a long time would trigger higher-than-ideal demand, thus producing inflation.

In the case of the Philippines, however, economists and banks declared that even with the unexpected and robust GDP growth of 7.9 percent in the first half, consumer prices were rising at a tolerable pace.

Citigroup, however, said the BSP might be prompted to increase its key policy rates earlier next year.

"Two quarters of strong GDP growth ... would contribute to igniting latent inflationary pressures next year [and risk is] likely to underpin overnight rate normalization early next year," Citigroup said.

Earlier this year, the BSP was expected to raise its key policy rates by mid-year. However, policymakers decided to keep the rates at historic lows as they noted the need to ensure that the weak recovery would be sustained.

The uncertain recovery of the US economy, one of the biggest export markets for the Philippines and other Asian countries, proved that policies supporting renewed strength—among them a low interest rate regime—should be maintained to keep GDP growing.

Monetary officials added that the favorable outlook on inflation allowed the BSP to keep its policy rates at historic lows mark

A2010 B2

Emerging Asia to weather global economic slowdown

By Doris C. Dumlao

STRONG MOMENTUM as reflected by robust second-quarter economic growth would help emerging Asia weather a weakening US-led global slowdown, according to American investment bank Merrill Lynch.

The Philippines, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan and Thailand were among the Asian economies that outperformed expectations.

The country's gross domestic product grew 7.9 percent in the second quarter against a

B2

Hybrid rice firms plan IPOs

By Riza T. Olchondra

TWO COMPANIES dealing in hybrid rice development and production are planning to go public, seeing steadily increasing demand for food as an instrument of long-term growth.

Bohlkhuong Philippines, a joint venture between listed Filipino company Agritechnics Inc. and Bohlkhuong Seed Group, a unit of a major agricultural company in China.

The company has just been created and already aims to establish enough yearly growth to get listed in two or three years.

The other company, SL Agritech Corp., is the dominant player in the hybrid rice business in the Philippines.

SL Agritech has not made firm announcement on the date of its proposed listing but its chair and CEO, Henry Lim Hoo Gioy, said in a phone interview Thursday night that the company could announce a firm date before the end of 2010.

Both companies are focused on developing hybrid rice seed varieties, selling these to farmers and buying back the produce.

"I am actually quite bullish about the food stock market. Agritechnics is recession-proof. Whatever happens to the rest of the stocks, [we] will weather because we are food," Atil CEO and president Antonio Tiu said in an interview.

Business is seen to be good because many Filipinos cannot live a day without eating rice. The quipped.

The Philippines' shortfall in rice production however stands at 2 to 3 million tons a year, and behind rice is just the product we address the gap, Tiu said.

Hybrid rice has much higher yield than regular varieties.

Lim said he was bullish not just in getting listed but in the future growth of SL Agritech as well.

SL Agritech plans to raise as much as P2 billion from its initial public offering, with up to 20 percent of the

B3

INDICATORS

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

Sept. 9, 2010

44.120

STOCK MARKET

Sept. 9, 2010

97.78

Profit-taking seen next week

THE LOCAL stock market yesterday paused for a long weekend break after an eight-day bull run over the more-than-six-month territory.

Optimism remains high especially given the favorable numbers mentioned. But profit-taking temptation or skeptical grousing on the market is to Philippine Stock Exchange index gained another 2.67 percent to close at a new all-time high of 3,902.86 on Thursday.

Investment numbers were released yesterday as the nation, along with most Muslim countries, observed the end of Ramadan.

Now that we've reached a new point, there are only two ways which we could go. If the rally persists strongly until next week, we can see the index reaching 4,000 within the year, or sooner. But if investors realize that there is no other single fundamental news to back up such a rally, the index may pull back," said AB Capital Securities analyst Mara Arlyna Sardillo.

As always, Sardillo said there was no significant data or factor which could convincingly lead the market higher.

"Most gains achieved in the past days were solely due to aggressive interest in

PROFIT TAKING B2

SMDC to raise fresh P10B

By Doris C. Dumlao

WITH STOCK prices trading at record highs, residential property developer SM Development Corp. wants to raise about P10 billion from the sale of new shares to existing shareholders before the year's end.

The board of SMDC, which is part of tycoon Henry Sy's SM group, recently approved the offering of 3.33 billion new shares through a stock rights offering.

"The size of our rights offering is still hostage being evaluated by (arranger) BDO Capital given market conditions," said SMDC vice president Jose Gokiangkee.

Under the approved entitlement ratio, shareholders will have the right to purchase one additional share for every three existing shares held. About 16 percent of SMDC's shares are held by the public.

Based on SMDC's closing price of P7.80 a share at the stock market on Thursday, the additional shares offering could be worth about P14 billion.

BDO Capital and Investment Corp. president Eduardo Francisco said SMDC may be able to raise about P10 billion based on an assumed discount to be offered to the shareholders.

Rights offers usually provide a discount on the prevailing market price to make the exercise more attractive.

Francisco assumes that the offering would be priced at a 10-30 percent discount.

Proceeds from the stock rights offer will be used by SMDC for landbanking and project development.

The offering seeks to take advantage of the bullish local stock market sentiment and SMDC's prospects as a fast-growing residential developer.

According to property research specialist Colliers International (Philippines), SMDC was the largest residential developer in Metro Manila as of June this year, both in terms of the number of units sold and the value of sales.

For the first semester, SMDC booked a 29 percent year-on-year increase in net income to P3.3 billion on the back of robust real estate sales. Total real estate revenues grew by 77 percent to P6.1 billion during the period from a year ago.

Group OKs stock rights offering

Aboitiz to provide Meralco with 95MW

By Aimy S. Barra

ABOITIZ POWER Corp. is set to provide an additional 95 megawatts (MW) in electricity supply to power distributor Manila Electric Co. (Meralco), beginning September this year.

Through its subsidiary Therma Luzon Inc., APC said the additional capacity will be made available to Meralco all hours, starting on Sept. 23 until Dec. 31, 2011, or 12 months after the start of open access, whichever comes first.

Assuming the supply contract ends on Dec. 31, 2011, APC is expected to have delivered by then a total of 827,880 megawatt-hours (mWh) to Meralco.

"Aboitiz Power has always preferred selling its power via bilateral contracts as a fair and reasonable price. This paves the way for predictable revenues for the company," said Luis Miguel Aboitiz, SVP for trading and marketing at the APC.

APC said in a statement that the additional supply is expected to be sourced from the 500-MW Pagbilao coal-fired power plant in Quezon.

Therma Luzon is the indirect, dear power producer subsidiary one (DPOS) of the facility which means that it is now managing the government's contracted energy output from the IPPs, including selling their energy portfolio and/or offering ancillary services.

Years ran National Power Corp. used to manage the Pagbilao IPP contract before the Aboitiz unit bagged the contract in a bidding held last year.

Meralco needs the additional power supply given the expected 3-percent growth in its electricity sales this year.

Officials said in the beginning of the year that a better performance was expected given the recovery of the local economy.

Globe wants more interconnection deals

By Paola G. Manrecillo

MAKATI-BASED Globe Telecom Inc. announced plans to strike more interconnection agreements with rival phone firms as part of efforts to expand its network to reach more subscribers.

In a statement, the company said it was in talks to forge interconnection deals with Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT), Bayan Telecommunications Inc. and Digitel Telecommunications Philippines Inc. to include key cities outside the National Capital Region with strong economic growth.

"Local interconnection means that 'text4cash' and 'e-money' subscribers in various provinces or cities can make local calls without any extra charges," the company said.

Without interconnection, a Globe landline subscriber has to pay long distance rates to call a Digitel, PLDT or Bayantel landline subscriber within the same area, and vice versa.

"We hope to complete more interconnection agreements by end of the year," Globe head of the corporate and legal services group Froilan Castelo said. "Even if competitors in the local telecommunications industry increase, we need to still do just that under the public good. Interconnection is a win-win for everyone."

Globe plans to pursue interconnection talks with PLDT for Zamboanga City, Iligan City and the entire Northern Mindanao area this year, following the successful interconnection of the two telecommunications companies in Davao City last July.

Emerging Asia to weather . . .

From page B1

growth momentum of 6.3 percent, said a Merrill Lynch economist in a report dated Sept. 2.

But due to risks of a "growth recession" in the US, given a sluggish labor market and no expected fiscal tightening, Merrill Lynch envisioned Asia refraining from upgrading its growth forecasts for most emerging Asian economies. It raised its growth forecast only for Hong Kong and Taiwan to 6.5 percent and 9.4 percent, respectively, from 5.5 percent and 8.5 percent.

On the other hand, Merrill Lynch kept a growth forecast of 3.9 percent for the Philippines this year, lower than the latest market consensus of at least 4 percent.

Despite the slowdown that we expect, Asia will remain a rapidly growing region in a slowly growing world," the report said.

Emerging Asia as a whole was seen growing 8.0 percent this year, led by the expected expansion of China (10.1 percent), Singapore (9.5 percent), Taiwan (9.4 percent) and India (8.4 percent).

"We remain optimistic about Asia's structural dynamics—something we've written in recently about. High savings rates, strong consumer, corporate and government balance sheets; liquid, healthy banking systems; large external surpluses/foreign exchange reserves, and fast/fiscal Asia's strong demographics suggest that the region will remain a key driver of global growth," Merrill Lynch said.

Overall, the investment bank said the global economy was expected to remain resilient in 2011. It projected global GDP to advance 3.9 percent, down from an earlier estimate of 4.1 percent.

In the United States, Merrill Lynch projected only a 20-percent probability of an outright recession next year, which was slightly above the historical average.

It said China would still act as a stabilizer in Asia, as it did in 2008, while India and Indonesia could play a similar role.

With the US federal funds rate stuck near zero, Merrill Lynch said this was creating an "intense" policy dilemma for Asia.

"Central banks will need to balance rate hikes and foreign exchange appreciation against the temptations of easy foreign exchange intervention and liquidity sterilization, and even the use of quantitative restrictions or capital controls," the investment house said.

Low interest rates . . .

From page B1

longer than initially anticipated.

The National Statistics Office earlier reported that inflation averaged 4.2 percent in the first eight months of the year. This kept the government's full-year target of limiting inflation within 3 percent to 5 percent unchanged, monetary, economic managers said.

Hybrid rice firms plan IPOs

From page B1

company's thirst to be made available.

"We are just seeing our listing, but we are only confident of the stock market. I believe the market is a new high and the just shows more growth is possible," Lim said.

On Thursday, The Philippine Stock Exchange index closed at 3,903.56, beating the previous all-time high of 3,875.08 recorded on Oct. 6, 2007.

Disclosures

Manulife Corp. has disclosed the buyback of 26,000 shares at P3.62 per share on Sept. 8, in line with the company's share buyback program.

Vantage Equities Inc. has disclosed the buyback of 340,000 shares at P1.30 per share and the buyback of 5,000 shares at P1.40 per share on Sept. 8, in line with the company's share buyback program.

Fred Elser Corp. disclosed on Sept. 8 the appointment of Jorge Lucas as vice president of the company.

Solid Group Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on Sept. 30 at 3 p.m. at the Fairways, Manila Golf & Country Club, Harvard Road, Forbes Park, Makati City. Stockholders of record as of Aug. 31 will be entitled to notice of, and to vote at, the said meeting.

Alliance Global Group Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on Oct. 5 at 9 a.m. at the Grand Ballroom, Ground Floor, Marriott Hotel Manila, 10 Newport Avenue, Newport City Complex, Pasay City. Stockholders of record as of Aug. 27 will be entitled to notice of, and to vote at, the said meeting.

Philippine Bank of Communications has postponed its annual stockholders' meeting from Oct. 8 to Oct. 15 at 2 p.m. at the 12th floor, PBCom Tower, 6795 Ayala Avenue corner V.A. Rufino Street, Makati City.

Keppel Philippines Marine Inc. will hold a special stockholders' meeting on Sept. 29, 10 a.m. at the Ilustrado Magdalenas Room, Makati Shangri-La Club, 1 Ayala Avenue Corner Gamboa Streets, Salcedo Village, Makati City. Stockholders of record as of Sept. 1 are entitled to vote at the meeting. *Compiled by Zuhairi Esmaña, NCR/BFR Bureau*

Profit-taking seen . . .

From page B1

certain stocks. Given such unpredictable investor behavior, it has been a challenge to track where we are really headed," Ibañez said.

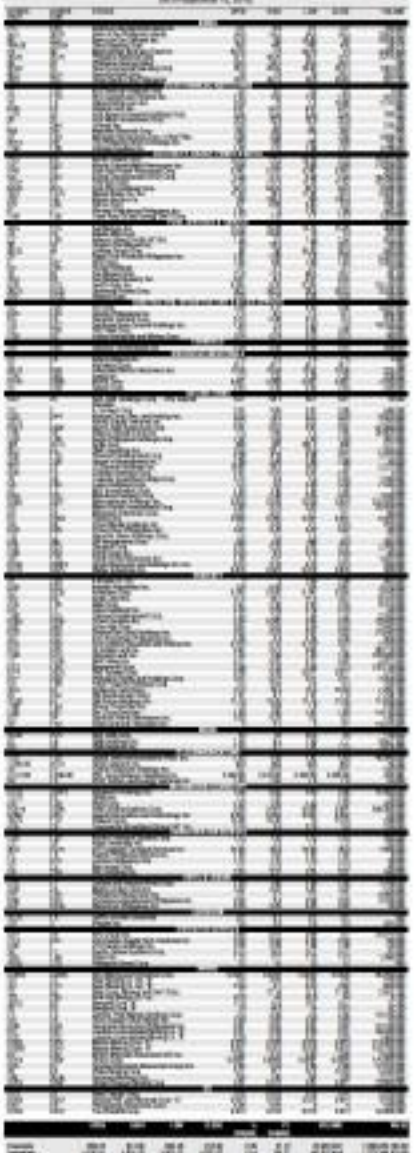
Aggressive buying may remain next week, she said, but quickly added that the two-week run-up had led the local market to an overbought position.

"Valuations have also turned higher with this recent rally. The Dow only slightly provides insight on the local market's direction. For now, we recommend to buy on dips," she said.

Ibañez said the US Dow Jones Industrial Index rose by 28.21 points or 0.27 percent to 10,415.24.

Doris C. Dumlao

Philippine Stock Exchange



Firm cements its commitment to the environment

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

MOST INDUSTRIES do not know it, but a good part of their trash is going to waste.

This is according to leading cement manufacturer Holcim Philippines Inc., which has invested in a technology that allows it to use industrial wastes to partly fuel the operations of its cement manufacturing plants and help solve the country's mounting garbage problem.

The Holcim group has been co-processing waste materials in Europe and the United States for more than 40 years, and the technology is now in the country through Geonyele, Holcim's waste management unit.

Geonyele vice president Ernesto C. Paredes told the Inquirer in an interview that 5 percent of Holcim's fuel already comes from industrial waste and other nonrecyclable, non-biodegradable waste such as plastics. The company hopes to increase it to at least 10 percent.

Environmental hazards

CORPORATE CITIZEN

Without the co-processing facility, the industrial waste would have gone to the dumps, blocking drainage systems and waterways, thus posing serious health and environmental hazards.

"Geonyele provides businesses and communities with a safe and environment-friendly technology for safe disposal of waste, but more than productively as alternative fuel or raw material," says Paredes.

Co-processing, he says, subjects the waste material to excessively high temperatures, reaching up to 2,000 degrees Celsius and long residence time within the closed confines of a cement kiln, resulting in total destruction of the complex waste compounds that would otherwise be harmful to the environment.

"The recovery of energy from the waste stream also helps in conserving nonrenewable resources such as coal," Paredes adds.

According to a 2003 study by the Asian Development Bank, industrial waste accounts for as much as 26 percent of the estimated 6,000 metric tons of waste the metropolis produces in a day, thus, diverting just a portion to Holcim's facility significantly reduce the volume of trash going to the dumps.

Abetter alternative

Geonyele currently sources industrial waste for its co-processing facility from industries committed to responsible disposal of waste materials. These include automotive, breakbeam, cosmetics, concrete goods, petroleum and semiconductors.

Paredes says the co-processing technology provides these firms with a better alternative to shipping their waste out to other countries for treatment, which could be more expensive.

Holcim is actually capable of processing more nonbiodegradable waste, but Paredes says the company first has to determine if there is stable supply of the industrial waste and if there is enough space to stabilize additional investments in the facility.

Holcim says it has not yet realized significant savings considering the huge investments made in the facilities for co-processing. But more than helping Holcim save on costs, Geonyele primarily seeks to enable industries to properly dispose of their wastes.

HOLCIM'S kiln where industrial waste and other materials are co-processed.

GEOCYCLE manufactures industrial waste into fuel to help run its cement manufacturing plants.

Fuel

He explains that industrial waste is not simply fed into the co-processing facility but is still processed or broken down so that it can be used as fuel.

As a matter of policy, Holcim's waste management unit does not accept infectious and biologically active hospital waste, materials containing asbestos, entire batteries and explosives to ensure the safety of employees and the environment.

Aside from Geonyele, Holcim also has Continuous Emission Monitoring System devices in the kilns of its four plants in the country to ensure that plant emissions are within standards set under the Philippine Clean Air Act.

Banks continue to see rise in resources

By Michelle V. Reiss

RESOURCES OF the country's banking sector continued to grow in July, rising by 6.5 percent to P6.4 trillion from the P6.01 trillion recorded in the same period last year.

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas officials said the growth was largely influenced by the sustained rise in deposits, which they said reflected residents' increasing confidence in the domestic banking sector.

According to monetary officials, this development provides a measure of comfort for the government, which is now trying to persuade the private sector to partly finance vital public infrastructure projects.

In July, banking sector's combined assets increased by 6.5% to P6.4T

The increase in resources was seen across all sub-sectors of the banking sector, the central bank said.

Universal and commercial banks accounted for bulk of the P5.01 trillion in resources—their share rising by about 6.8 percent from the P5.29 trillion in July last year.

Thrift banks had a P574 billion share of the total, marking a 5.3-percent rise from the previous year's P545 billion.

Rural banks contributed the smallest with P159.2 billion, registering a 6-percent gain from P151.1 billion in the same period last year.

According to Bangko Sentral Governor Amando Tetangco Jr., the rise in resources of the country's banks will enable the sector to support a projected increase in credit requirements as government and private sectors ramp up their foreign investment to do business in the Philippines.

Tetangco said the low interest rate environment would be kept at the moment to encourage lending and accelerate growth of the economy following last year's slowdown.

The BSP kept key policy rates at historic lows—4 percent for overnight borrowing and 6 percent for overnight lending. The move will allow banks to lower the interest rates they charge individuals and corporate borrowers.

The BSP earlier reported that lending by commercial banks also grew in July from a year ago. Banks' outstanding loan portfolio amounted to P2.26 trillion—up by 11.7 percent from P1.93 trillion.

"The robust growth in bank lending is in line with the ongoing overall expansion in domestic economic activity. Given strong demand and sizable liquidity, bank lending will continue to rise," Tetangco said.

Power utilities will have to go public soon

By Amy R. Remo

ALL POWER generation and transmission companies, as well as local distribution utilities, will be forced to go public once the Energy Regulatory Commission issues the final rules and begins to strictly enforce the policy, as specified under the Electric Power Industry Reform Act (Epira).

The ERC is now working on rules that will govern the implementation of Resolution No. 16, Series of 2008, which was earlier promulgated to counter the power companies' compliance to the Epira.

Under the Epira, generation companies, IPPs and their respective holding companies that are not publicly listed must offer and sell to the public a portion of not less than 15 percent of their common shares of stock.

"While the Epira mentions common shares of stocks, the Commission extends the scope to warrants, taking into account the goal sought to be achieved by the Epira, which is to broaden the ownership base of the generation, transmission and distribution sectors," the ERC said.

This move is expected to "protect public interest as it is affected by rates and services of the distribution utilities and other providers of electric power," ERC executive director Francis Saturnino Juan.

Aquino directs Cabinet to look into trade group's suggestions

By Abigail L. Ho

PRESIDENT AQUINO has asked members of his Cabinet and other related agencies to consider the proposed reform agenda of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, citing the "complementarities" between the proposal and the administration's own efforts.

PCCI president Domingo Chua said that Malacañang, at an Aug. 6 lunch with the business group, said the proposed reform agenda answered "the call of the President to take steps towards active participation in our governance and [an] leading solutions for the country's ailments."

Chua said this could just be "the start of a strong private consultation by the new administration. This developments has intensified the business sector's desire to work closely with Aquino in his quest in building a better nation."

PCCI said a number of other business organizations last July 21 submitted to Malacañang a 24-page "wish list," which urged the government to focus on putting its fiscal house in order, eliminating corruption, boosting the competitiveness of industries, and facilitating trade.

Under the proposed reform agenda, the government over the next six years should work to balance the budget, improve tax collection, reduce unnecessary tax, raise taxes on sin products and luxury items, pay down the government's debt, and address public spending.

The Aquino administration should also work harder to eliminate corruption on all levels and curtail smuggling, as well as reverse the deteriorating competitiveness of local industries.

To boost competitiveness, government should improve infrastructure, promotion, and development efforts should be integrated, he said.

"It means jobs and income, we need an environment that is conducive to business and investments. What we submitted to the President reflects our desire to partner with government to reduce poverty incidence to single digits, to create investment stillness into the country and ensure the sustainability of business," Chua said.

Making fools of farmers

By Ernesto M. Ordoñez

IN THE former administration, the government appeared to make fools out of farmers. Though the farmers were never fools, they were treated as such. Last Sept. 5, this picture dramatically changed.

In the previous administration, there were several indicators that deserved government's disrespect for farmers.

1. The Alyansa Agribuhayan, a coalition of 42 federations and organizations representing all the major agricultural sectors, helped to more than tripling the Oil budget from P13 billion in 2005 to P42 billion in 2010. However, DA never allowed the farmers to monitor the use of this budget to ensure it was properly spent.

2. The farmers were used as the excuse for large DA subsidies. However, these subsidies instead went to unscrupulous officials, as evidenced by the alleged fertilizer, swine and urban scams.

3. In smuggling, the Alyansa presented a list of 39 smuggled onion shipments with documented proof. The BOC ignored them. When the Alyansa filed a charge with the Ombudsman against BOC on this issue, the Ombudsman similarly ignored them.

Non-violence

COMMENTARY

The Alyansa members reject violence as a means to achieve their valid quest for justice even if violence had been done against them. An Alyansa member organizer-provincial vice president, and its regional coordinator were murdered over the last year. Nevertheless, the Alyansa has chosen the non-violent alternative of elections to achieve change.

Though the Alyansa has a policy of non-partisanship, its member organizations are free to campaign for the leaders they believe will give them the change they want. A great majority campaigned for President Noynoy Aquino. He urban Poor won, they expected change.

However, when the farmers made their first move against onion smuggling, they were very disappointed. Though supported by the top officials of the Bureau of Customs (BOC) and the Department of Agriculture (DA), the farmers were once again treated like fools by the BOC and DA subordinates. These subordinates sabotaged their superiors' good intentions through planned inaction. This happened during the botched anti-onion smuggling arrest raid last Aug. 24.

- The subordinates took action only 11 days after the farmers presented the smuggling arrest evidence to them.
- They waited 2 hours after the scheduled start of the raid. This caused the disappearance of the smuggled cargoes from the entries monitored earlier.
- They refused to implement the enhancement procedures agreed upon earlier with their BOC superior.

Dramatic change

After the farmers requested the DA and BOC senior management to move closer to supervise their subordinates, the farmers saw a dramatic change.

Last Sept. 3, acting on information provided by a concerned citizen, the Alyansa reported eight identified containers of smuggled onions to a BOC official. When the official said that he would order them released, the Alyansa leader said he was not satisfied with this response. He requested immediate confiscation. He then called two other BOC officials for more help.

This time, instead of waiting 15 days, the BOC acted swiftly. Within an hour, the BOC seized the eight containers. A BOC official said that these containers were already on their way out of the customs area. Had there been even a one day delay, these containers would have gotten away scot free, like in the past.

When the farmers wanted at least one of the customs officials to open the smuggled onions, another BOC official told them the farmers had to first consult their PHLOOD. Again, the Alyansa talked to another BOC official to say that this was a ridiculous imposition on poor farmers. This other official agreed.

Last Sept. 7, the Alyansa brought this matter up directly to Agriculture Secretary Proceso Alcala. They argued that DA should take equal responsibility as BOC in preventing the smuggling that is harming the DA constituents. Immediately, P6,000 was given to the farmers to satisfy the BOC demand.

Making fools of superiors

The farmers have never been fools. But what the farmers complained they were being made to look like fools, the government turned a deaf ear. Under the new administration, the DA and BOC top officials fully support the farmers. But the DA and BOC subordinates initially continued to treat them like fools.

Last September 3, this started to change. We have seen the top management's quick and effective action in improving most clearly their subordinates. One senior official has already commanded to transfer one of his erring subordinates.

Similar transfers of other erring subordinates should immediately follow. If not, these subordinates may succeed in making fools not only out of the farmers but also out of their own superiors. Should this happen, it will mean disaster for our nation.

(The author is chair of Agrinurture, former secretary for presidential flagship programs and projects, and former undersecretary for trade and industry. For inquiries and suggestions, email opinion@philippine.com or telefax 810-8521.)

Editor Cesar D. Margueron
Send your feedback to ...
SCIENCE/HEALTH

3 habits of longest living populations

By Tess R. Salazar

OUR DAYS are numbered. And no one is spared from the certainty of his or her own mortality. The thing is, some reckless just get to run that much longer here on earth than others. The typical Filipino can expect to live to about 70 years. Does that seem long enough for you?

What if you learn the five longevity hotspots where researchers studied were found to be lean, energetic and have few areas of chronic illness like heart disease and cancer. These spots are the Japanese island city of Okinawa, the Greek island of Ikaria, the Italian village of Campodimele, the valley home of Hunza in northwest Pakistan, and Loma Linda in southern China.

Nutritionist-Dolly Reyner, in her book "50 Secrets of the World's Longest Living People," pinpointed 50 commonalities among these five longevity hotspots. Due to space (and time) constraints—pardon the pun—I suppose Hunza can only cite the three most striking habits.

1 They have their fruits and veggies. To be specific, they eat five to seven servings of fruits and vegetables every day. Aside from being blessed with fresh air and nutrient-rich soil, the longest living populations on earth have an large amounts of fresh fruits and vegetables a day.

Compare this to the typical Filipino's daily consumption of vegetables and fruits—just 111 g and 54 g, respectively, for a total of 165 g, which falls pitifully below the World Health Organization's recommended daily dietary allowance for fruits and vegetables of 400 grams per person per day (or two cups of raw vegetable salad or one cup of cooked vegetable per day and three servings of fruits).

Do we know that eating lots of fruits and veggies can help our tiny hearts be what if we fall short of the daily quota? We get our nutrients from our daily meals, right?

A study of 122,000 female American nurses, as detailed in the book "Healthy at 100" by John Robbins, found that those women who ate most daily were two and a half times more likely to get colon cancer than those women who ate most less than once a month.

In 2000, a comprehensive Harvard review of the research on dairy products and prostate cancer found that those who had seen the source of their lives consumed the most dairy products had double the risk of advanced prostate cancer and four times the rate of metastatic prostate cancer.

The book "The China Study" by T. Colin Campbell, Jacob Gould Schurman professor emeritus of nutrition biochemistry at Cornell University, and Thomas M. Campbell II also showed that animal protein promotes the growth of tumors. The book is filled also and based on a 20-year project conducted by Cornell University, Oxford University and the Chinese Academy of Preventive Medicine.

The book cited that a vast majority of all cancers, cardiovascular diseases and other forms of degenerative illness can be prevented simply by adopting a plant-based diet.

2 They maintain loving and intimate relationships. Issues a positive outlook in life and low stress levels. Filipinos are known to put more emphasis on family ties and love of others. Despite the adversities of life, we still manage to find time to laugh, sing, dance and have fun. Our close-knit circle of family and friends provide us with the support we need to overcome challenges in life. Our faith in God also helps us maintain a positive outlook in life.

Medical science is still unable to explain how and why one person develops cancer while another does not. It is known, however, that certain risk factors may increase the chances of developing this disease.

Leading factors include aging, as a higher incidence has been reported among people over the age of 65; use or exposure to tobacco and to alcohol products; as well as over exposure to sunlight, tanning beds, X-rays and radioactive substances; some viruses and bacteria; and long-term exposure to certain chemicals and substances.

A 2008 estimate of the Philippine Cancer Society shows that lung, breast and colon cancer are the top three types of cancers in the country, with lung cancer cases mostly affecting men, and that of the breast affecting the female populace. Other types include cancer of the cervix, prostate, blood or leukemia, stomach, thyroid, liver and kidney.

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Early detection, treatment

Doctors maintain that cancer is treatable, if and when it is detected early. Regular check-ups and screening programs are generally recommended but it also pays for an individual to be conscious of changes in his or her own body.

Avoiding or minimizing the known risk factors is just one way of reducing the threat of developing cancer. If a child has pneumonia a healthy weight coupled with a balanced caloric intake and regular physical activity, as a general rule, enjoy life and everything it has to offer, but all in moderation.

GRANDPARENTS can only send as far reward with care, they also require protection against some of the potentially dangerous illnesses.

One fine gift to treat grandparents

By Charles E. Bahan

HERE IN the Philippines where weekend family interaction still includes the parents of both mom and dad, making Grandparents Day, which will be celebrated tomorrow, sides, a special meaning.

It has become a perfect time to reflect on the need to address issues of health as the elderly individuals are facing the risk of spending considerable amount of money to cover the medications or hospitalization for an illness that could be prevented through inexpensive means.

Costly hospitalization

A lot of medical experts believe protecting the elderly against illnesses like flu and pneumonia should be given priority considering that these families also tend to suffer from dealing with costly hospitalization medications, especially if existing medical conditions get worse.

Aside from this concern especially when buying medicines and medical devices, elderly individuals, through the Expanded Senior Citizens Act, stay in fact, be able to conserve their local government resources to create a health program like creating a package that would enable them to avail of free if not highly discounted pneumococcal vaccine.

Considering that pneumonia is spread like the flu, by coughs and sneezes, by sharing drinking glasses and eating utensils with an infected person, and contact with and viruses or bacteria-laden, preventive measures like the best defense against 23 of the most prevalent pneumococcal types. For additional information log on to www.nvpbahan.ph).

Indeed, keeping our grandparents healthy and protected from their earnest find the cost of the family members have the greatest chance of needing of even an infections and potentially dangerous illnesses like pneumonia.

Early detection, prevention of cancer

"THE NORMAL cycle of cells begins when they are created out of a specific need of the human body. Over time, they divide to produce more cells to educating. Normally, the cells die out. However, there are cells that form even though the body does not need them, and these are those that refuse to die, even when they should," related Dr. Kelly Sal-vador of the Philippine Cancer Society, more commonly known as Pinoy. Salvador received human funded by the Jim Kim Foundation and the Association of Asia Pacific Medical Specialty Scholars.

The monthly forum, held at the Century Park Hotel, Good Old Boy, aims to educate, among laymen listeners on practical knowledge on health, medical facts and practices.

According to Salvador, these abnormal cells end up becoming tumors that are either benign or malignant. A benign tumor is no cause for worry as they are rarely life-threatening. Neither do these locally nearby cells to spread to other parts of the body. Once removed, they usually do not grow back.

A malignant tumor or cancer, on the other hand, is life-threatening, may invade or damage nearby cells and organs, and create, if left untreated, more cancerous cells to spread to other parts of the body.

Symptoms

Warning signs of cancer include thickening or lump in any part of the body, a new mole or change in an existing mole, sores that do not heal, persistent hoarseness or cough, change in bowel or bladder habits, discomfort after eating, hard time swallowing, unexplained weight gain or loss, unusual bleeding or discharge, or a constant feeling of weakness or fatigue.

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Wise decision

It is a wise decision considering pneumococcus is a common cause of not only mild illnesses, such as sinusitis and ear infections, but also of life-threatening infections such as pneumonia, meningitis and infections of the bloodstream. Most importantly, many strains are resistant to antibiotics.

Dr. Salvador explains that starting treatment and the physiologic changes that come with aging make the elderly especially prone to infections. Because like pneumonia, one of the major—and serious—complications of the.

While getting the flu doesn't mean one would automatically catch pneumonia afterward, is easily always sooner in high-risk individuals like the elderly and especially if they suffer from heart disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, emphysema, diabetes or weakened immune systems.

Pneumonia could develop a few of days after getting flu. Because of this, the unprotected portion of the country's population is at millions of elderly individuals are facing the risk of spending considerable amount of money to cover the medications or hospitalization for an illness that could be prevented through inexpensive means.

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Don't bite more than you could chew

I REVIEWED an article recently written by C. Glenn Cobey, a senior writer of Hill, Glenith & Liberty(r) magazine. He wrote about temporomandibular joint (TMJ) or jaw dysfunction. His resource person was Dr. Agnes B. Garcia, who specialized in oral rehabilitation, occlusion, dentistry. Incidentally, she's also the President of an investment and completely different type of dental practice which makes the trip to her dental clinic at the Dental Spa at Medical Plaza in Makati a relaxing, instead of a nerve-wracking experience. But that's another story.

Answering regarding TMJ disorders, he mentions how the condition without them realizing it. The TMJ, which is actually the joint of our upper and lower jaws, is probably one of the most overworked, sometimes abused joints in the body. "Daily," writes Glenn, "this considerable joint is opened an estimated 2,000 times as you chew, talk, or yawn."

A dysfunctional jaw is far from benign, and if untreated, it could have serious consequences on one's overall health. Some list to applicable pain in the neck, headache, ringing in the ears called tinnitus, and a noticeable despite the absence of cavities. TMJ dysfunction could be the culprit.

Other symptoms are:

- A clicking pain in and around the jaw.
- Limited ability to open the mouth very wide.
- Difficulty chewing or discomfort while chewing.
- Aching facial pain or facial feeling in the bone.
- Locking of the jaw joint, making it difficult to open or close the mouth.
- Uncomfortable bite, as if the upper and lower teeth are not fitting together properly and
- Swelling on the side of the face.

Technically, TMJ dysfunction is caused by a strain or injury to the joint which may be triggered or aggravated by grinding or clenching of the teeth, or improperly aligned teeth or bite. Other causes include:

- Dislocation of the soft cushion or disc between the ball and socket joint.
- Arthritis in the jaw joint.
- TMJ injury for a blow or other impact.
- Fatigue of the muscles that stabilize the TMJ from overwork (which can happen if one habitually grinds one's teeth).

Another factor

Stress is another factor, according to Dr. Garcia. This is probably the reason her clinic has a very soothing spa ambiance. "Many don't realize the debilitating effects grinding and clenching have on the teeth and jaw such that its subconscious practice continues on a daily basis," she explains.

TMJ dysfunction is frequently accelerated and undiagnosed because its symptoms are often attributed to something else. Patients may have gained headaches or facial pain as independent of TMJ issues, Dr. Garcia says. Ear aches always have it at the back of their minds when recurrent headaches, inexplicable pain or toothache, facial or jaw pains are present. "When some patients come in," says Dr. Garcia, "sometimes they don't even want to tell us their problem because the condition of their teeth is already apparent. I'll think to myself, 'Oh, grinder in-ch.'"

The headaches, when present, can either be migraine-like, or somewhat akin to the headache of the tension type. It may originate from behind the eyes or the side of the head just above the ears. The pain has also been described to often radiate down into the shoulders or upper limb. Another type of headache associated with TMJ dysfunction may seem to be the aura of the cluster-type.

TMJ dysfunction is considered a major dental problem; hence, some dentists specialize in this particular field—an open salon in TMJ dysfunction. It is part of what is labeled as comprehensive dentistry. Dr. Glenn trained at The Forsley Institute in Florida for this.

Pivotal point

The TMJ is a pivotal point, she says. "You must work out mode, that you look at the entire structure that is around the teeth: be the gums, the bones, and how they come together, where they are located on the neck, upper and lower joints; how the TMJ makes these come together; and how the muscles relate with all of these—there's why there's a field of TMJ specialists," she explains.

Treatment of TMJ dysfunction aims to relieve the painful muscle spasms and involves use of heat, massage and muscle-relaxing therapy. Dr. Glenn also advises avoiding certain foods or heavy foods, and taking over-the-counter anti-inflammatory drugs to relieve muscle pain and swelling. It may take one or two weeks to relieve the symptoms.

For teeth grinders, the dentist may construct a plastic appliance to separate the teeth and prevent grinding while one is asleep. Because set, hence, it is experienced when one is sleeping. "We aim to either stop it, minimize it, or protect the teeth as the person grinds," Dr. Glenn says. "It's not so much treating the grinding, but protecting the teeth from the damage caused by grinding." For some patients, crowns, bridges, or braces to adjust one's bite may be necessary.

As we need to consciously relax our jaws a little bit to prevent TMJ dysfunction. Or as Glenn advises in his article: "Don't bite more than you could chew." Well, that may as well be a good piece of advice in life.

PROPERTY

Editor Cesar D. Hangaway

A mid-income buyer's guide to buying a condo

DAHOALAN Gardens is a holistic community within the vibrant Mandaluyong City

FROM LEFT are Raoul B. Lambas, director for finance and operations; Alfredo R. Acerda, president; and Marc Encarnacion, senior project development manager

By Tessa R. Salazar

YOUNG COUPLE Louie Racasa and wife Eve, both in their 30s, had been looking around for a small condominium unit that would fit just right for them and their 6-year-old boy Gio. They spotted a 28-square-meter unit in Makati City, literally a few steps from their place of work and a mere five minutes from Gio's school.

Furthermore, the unit was still in its pre-selling stage, and was being offered for just below 1 million pesos. After doing some math, Louie and Eve decided to buy the unit. The proximity of the condo to their workplaces and Gio's school, and the obvious savings that resulted from going this had to do the family in, made them decide to go for it.

For professionals and busy couples like Louie and Eve who live and work in urban areas and don't have the time and interest in maintaining a bungalow or a single-detached house, they choose affordable condominium units.

For this unit, Louie drew fat financing from Pag-IBIG. His monthly amortization, today does not exceed P12,000, and is payable in just 10 years—well within the limits of the couple's combined income.

Property loans experts urge condo buyers, and all other buyers, of various forms of property for that matter, to develop financial intelligence on their intended investments, such as what loans and how to get them.

Eve did.

It is always best to research first on the loans your income bracket can avail of. Pag-Ibig housing loan packages, for instance, fall in the following amounts: up to P400,000 (with 8 percent per annum interest rate); over P400,001 to P750,000 (7 percent per annum interest); over P750,001 to $1 million (6.5 percent); over $1 million to $1.25 million (6.5 percent).

» MID-INCOME B2-1

A privileged lifestyle awaits at *Manhattan Heights*

Dining is a personal bliss at the Oasis

There's a place of privilege where you and your family can experience a richer lifestyle. It's located right within the Araneta Center, the country's first shopping and leisure complex.

Manhattan Heights, the third phase of the highly successful Manhattan Garden City, will soon be the focal point for modern living. From your deluxe unit, all you need is take an elevator ride to unwind amidst the greens. The fourth-floor podium deck features more than 20 different amenities – such as a swimming pool, fitness station, massage deck and jogging path – so you and your family don't need to go far from the city for some thrill.

Better yet, go up: each tower hosts a sky garden at the top four floors. Read a book, listen to the birds chirp, or just chill out to your favorite iPod tunes. Such is the privilege of having your private garden high above the metro's hustle and bustle.

Since your home will be at the heart of the metro's shopping mecca, you just need to take a stroll through Manhattan Heights' elevated walkways to reach Gateway Mall. Have a romantic dinner at the Oasis. Or if it's action you crave for, dash to the Araneta Coliseum to cheer for your favorite PBA team.

When it comes to work or school, Manhattan Heights also gives you an advantage. The Araneta Center hosts both UP-3 & MRT-3 stations, so no more traffic woes for you from now on. The University belt is only 25 minutes away, while Ortigas and Makati also has a short ride.

According to Megaworld Central Properties Inc. President Anthony Charlemagne Yu, "Only at Manhattan Heights will you get to live within the vibrant Araneta Center, enjoy a diverse set of amenities and pitch for the environment every time you take the trains. That's modern city living at par with other world-class cities such as New York, Singapore and Hong Kong."

To experience a privileged lifestyle at Manhattan Heights, please call Megaworld at 810-3333, visit the showroom at the 3rd level of Gateway Mall, or check out www.themanhattangardencity.com.

Families get to experience a privileged lifestyle at Manhattan Heights within the Araneta Center

More than 20 different amenities ensure your pleasure at Manhattan Heights

Slum(dog) millionaires in 'green' Philippines

By Iannan Cova

IN THE ritzy-to-riches drama "Slumdog Millionaire," a former street-dweller took on the ruthless elite over winning it a prized game show in Mumbai, India. But this lover about Danny Boyle's film that earned a clean sweep of Oscars last year. This is wealth with a twist, akin to an "imaginary utopia" for the informal settlers in the Philippines, said a renowned architect on green architecture encompassing.

When people in the slums are provided decent housing and made to live in "green" homes, we'd see the difference in their lifestyle. This is, contrary to their kind of wealth, said architect Felipe Belvis Rodrigo, chair of the Green Architecture Advocacy Philippines Network (GAP) and one of the lecturers of the Manila Construction Show 2010.

"Going green is not the easiest endeavor especially when the people in the green areas level are without the proper knowledge and while the whole idea of sustainability is still a new concept to the majority in the country," Belvis said. He hopes to be in an exclusive interview on Wednesday.

But the doesn't stop Green at "Green architecting what once was an impossible task of bringing sustainable projects even in the off communities and neighborhood.

Constructed wetland tech

In the Green Forests of the Manila Zoo, the Baguio City Constructed Wetland in Regent Determinations plan has for being the first city in the Philippines that utilizes the constructed wetland technology in treating domestic wastewaters of the city's sanitary site. The project—located in the 7.1-hectare wood housing site in the Federation's UE Village—was built in June 2008 and became operational in September 2009. Organic farming was also introduced to vegetable production in the village to provide livelihood opportunities.

This a paved to the big impact on LGU could do in sustainable construction, Belvis-made noted.

The sustainability of neighborhoods, homeowners and families in a community need be lumped on a sustainable action plan. "If environmental problems were already solved...if the lower level of society, the squares is less problems of the higher level of society," Belvis said.

What is surprising nowadays is the innate complaint of people toward the green architecture that started long time ago. In the past only big developments are reported to go green because of the outcome, explains. But doing so launches to bigger

THE DESIGNED weekend of Bayanan City, Negros Oriental — ARMAND BOTE

improvements on construction.

Belvis made noted that any house style, even those in the low-cost and socialized range, can be built to require relatively minimal amounts of energy to cool, and designed to "green." So he designed improvements in building elements and construction techniques as well as lighting, ventilation and cooling systems, often most modern energy-saving ideas to be integrated in the new type of house design without sacrificing comfort, health, or esthetics, Belvis made reiterated.

Green architecture can be more expensive initially, Belvismade put it around 20-15 percent higher when compared to the traditional building practices. But calculating the total benefits, green architecture actually provides more savings and healthy returns of investments because it requires less or no maintenance, Belvismade explained.

Entering green models

Although green architecture is not yet widely practiced in the country there are already existing models that have used the concept such as the previous projects of the Ayala group, the BCDC Tower, the Zuellig building in Makati and San Life Center in Taguig City.

While some tried to seek the certification of United States' Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) and other accreditations from organizations abroad, Belvismade said that considering the payments required—that could reach tens of millions of pesos—they realized it's no longer cost-efficient.

While the many certification and rating systems worldwide, there have become confusing to the public. "There are plenty marketing strategies and bragging rights at the end of the day," he said.

Part of the GreenAP's advocacy is pushing for a law that would require buildings to implement green architecture, even those considered not low-cost housing projects.

On Sept. 20, the country will remember the progress brought by Tropical Storm "Ondoy" that submerged the country last year and claimed 280 lives with a month's worth of rain falling in just six hours.

Because Property asked the "green architect" of the possible measures to avoid them. Aside from barring development on flood-prone areas and watersheds, Belvismade reiterated the need for the construction industry to subscribe to sustainable practices, plus "the construction industry is a huge consumer of raw materials and energy, equating to negative impact to the environment. Excessive development compounds this problem," he said.

As such, the green sector like the construction industry must take the role to be integrating sustainability principles in its operations.

For its part, Holcim, one of the world's leading suppliers of cement and aggregates, has also tracked on the path to sustainability. Through its Holcim Awards for Sustainable Construction, a global competition, pioneering sustainable projects and creative concepts are recognized. In the Philippines, the company has the Holcim Philippines Foundation Awards for Sustainable Construction which honors outstanding Filipino efforts in sustainable construction.

Take extra step for PWDs

PEOPLE WITH Disability or PWD. I do not know if this is the politically correct term to refer to the disabled or handicapped sector, but the basic truth is that there are the people we must take great care to treat with due respect. Developing buildings particularly in public areas. There are those who may be a concern among with spaces, entrances and small children, although there may be a concern among the users and patrons of malls, parks, amusement centers, sports complexes, we cannot disregard their concerns and needs. Perhaps the ways they move they require more space because they are not as able to move their limbs as freely as those who are not disabled.

LIVING ARCHITECTURE

Marcus Felipe Gutierrez Jr.

Need for better facilities

I used to have my designs on standard accessibility codes, which I generally follow very well. However, talking with actually pushing and pushing a wheel one in a wheelchair, I realized that the codes are not enough to provide the disabled for better facilities.

There are malls that are very friendly to people with disability, such as Ayala Center, Makati and the new Bonifacio Mall. It is quite easy for wheelchairs and the disabled to navigate from the parking lot into the mall.

In our country, we are blessed with many close-knit families who frequently go around in a group. So many times they will wheelchairs are usually pushed by to navigate, rather than motorized and self-operated. It is not enough that just to put ramps in place. Rails must be installed correctly with the proper slope, width and safety features.

The most common problems with doors is that there do not open automatically and if automatic doors are provided to some, it will be difficult for the person on a wheelchair to enter. In some toilets for the handicapped, door closers make it difficult to push in a wheelchair while keeping the door open, even if the handicapped or hand person is assisted by someone else.

At the Ateneo Center, it is not so easy to get from the landing of the coliseum to a school class. Although there are ramps installed in some places, these are not sufficiently addressed and grounds and others do not even attempt to be accessible to those from concerned.

Blocked ramps

In add to the difficulty, these ramps are blocked by impatient business establishments that appropriate the ramps for their own parking, emergency plans hours, or signage. The authorities must acquire full compliance with the requirements that are in every building code.

In exhibition halls like the World Trade Center, there must be an ongoing posting of the exhibitors and exhibitors who can barely put up their displays and booths with limitations disabled exhibitors. Sometimes they have to ask for assistance from other exhibitors in a different and dangerous maneuver a wheelchair. This situation should have been anticipated and solutions implemented before.

I hope that the administrators of these facilities review their safety handbooks and somewhat their policies to ensure that the disabled is not treated as second class citizens.

Experience in the field teaches us. This is only I believe that every architect and architecture student, the experience gained by a wheelchair or meeting an elderly person on a public place is better understood than reading about it. Sometimes, we can't even imagine things designing merely to meet the standards easy so it is enough. We must take an easier step for them. They ought to be the People We Behind.

for your comments and questions, please e-mail mailto:

CAMELLA Naga offers scenery and affordable homes of true value and quality investment

CAMELLA NAGA

Growing at the heart of Bicol

WITH CAMARINES Sur taking its rightful place in the world stage as a forward destination for tourists, the phenomenal growth of the province looks to continue to progress in Camarines Sur. The economy promises to provide strong returns and affordable homes of true value and quality investments is continuing the success of its first phase in Camarines Sur and is seen growing larger as it builds its latest community in Naga City.

Dubbed as the heart of Bicol, Naga is the most densely populated city in the region and is home to the commercial, financial, educational and religious centers of Bicol. As more and more people take residence in Naga, the presence of Camarilio ensures that the growing population will have a lifestyle that has a place to call home.

Recently launched is Camella Naga, a community of stylish and functional homes that reflect Camella's vision of a higher standard of living that is within the reach of every Filipino. The community, in three phases, will be offering the affordable Camella homes, prime series, the premium Lessandra series and the larger two-storey Verona Series.

"When you think about the wide range of products that Camella Homes offers, you have to marvel at the variety and the flexibility that we are extending to our clients. Our properties are intuitively designed to respond to the greater needs of families that their market segments require," said Camella President Elizabeth C. Tolentino.

Italian flavored

Indeed, the Italian-themed Camella Naga can provide a suitable home for clients in the different stages of their lives—young professionals, growing families, newlyweds, retirees, empty nesters in their twilight years and even parents who want to ensure their children's safety while pursuing good education at the heart of Naga City. Complementing the successful lifestyle of its residents is an estate property management team that keeps tab on the safety and security of homeowners, as their families enjoy the peaceful days and restful nights.

Furthermore, Camella Naga offers a license to luxurious that is not merely strategic but breath-taking as well. The property is on the Maharlika Highway, making it easily accessible even to those who rely on public vehicles. It is close to the airport, several schools and the new world-famous Cam Sur Watersports complex which is home to several international watersports events.

On top of these are family friendly amenities that have become part of every Camella development's strength. Located within the community are the Clubhouse and its swimming pool, playgrounds and basketball courts, a spacious courtyard with fountains, pocket gardens, multi-lush green canopy, outdoor stations, jogging trails and therapy paths and lots.

As an added convenience, residents have easy access to homes within the community through their tricycles. There is no doubt that residents in Camella Naga are located of the quality and investment value of their homes. Backed by Camella, with its 33 years of experience in a pioneer in the affordable housing segment, can provide.

Camella is a subsidiary of Vista Land & Lifescapes Inc., the country's largest home builder. It has developed more than 200,000 homes through 87 projects and is maintaining a strong presence in Mega Manila and 19 other key provincial destinations and 44 cities and municipalities, while aggressively expanding to other regions.

Living it up in the city

CITY LIVING. These two words have become synonymous with progress and lifestyle that a significant share of the home buying populace is enamored about. The found countless numbers and the numerous possibilities that city life offers have never been easy to resist. Even as if the shoals to which one will be tempting out there is an equally modern as the city has become.

Such is The Trion Towers, presently going, city developer Robinsons Land Corp.'s exquisite proposition to city slickers who love the urban jungle and make no apologies for it. Aside from its obvious guise to action in the metropolis, there is much to love about The Trion Towers. A project of Robinsons Residences, the urban-style brand of Robinsons Land, The Trion Towers features are designed to complement, if not raise the bar, of both condominium and city living.

Iconic tri-axial design

Rising at Eight Avenue corner McKinley Parkway in Bonifacio Global City, The Trion Towers consists of three residential towers which boast of an iconic tri-axial design. It is an architectural masterpiece that provides unique views from practically every angle. The design, namely the Origin dezlin, Miracle Bay and Lagoon de Bay. On top of that, it introduces the revolutionary TriAxial Truth Wave System (TWS) which allows the free flow of air and sunlight not only to common areas, but in corridors and every unit as well.

The unit mix are deeply suited to the ultimate city living, with studio units (25.00 to 30.00 sqm), one-bedroom flat units (30.00 to 61.00 sq m), and three-bedroom flat units (130.11 to 133.02 sq m), all with high ceilings and generous window openings. Some units feature a balcony which should enhance the alfresco experience that is typical of city life. Unit prices range from P3.6 million to P12.3 million.

Amenities, features

The Trion Towers is replete with amenities and features that should delight the esthetic sensibilities and personal pursuits of the market of forward-moving professionals and established families. Indeed, there is the beautifully designed lobby, one for each tower, with a spacious amenity deck, high-speed elevators, function rooms, a fitness center, function rooms, library/lounge with free Wi-Fi Internet access, spa, mini-theater and videoke room for the enjoyment of all residents and their guests.

Moreover, residents will also delight in the lavishes that come with living in The Trion Towers, including adult and kiddie pools, decorative ponds and refreshing fountains of the Central Plaza, kiddie playroom, bicycle trails, jogging paths, soaking tracks and meditation garden, all amid lush landscapes that provide the healing benefits of nature.

Already, the Southern Global City sprawled before future residents. Whether one needs to connect, converge or socialize with people, pursue personal interests and passions, this modern city pulsates with possibilities. There are global retail brands that scratch that shopping itch, top-rate restaurants that satisfy the palate and entertainment places. There are art galleries and specialty shops to feed the cosmopolitan's need for individuality and eclectic perspectives.

THE TRION Towers

Land use plan key to solving RP's shelter problem

By Charlee E. Bulan

A LAND-USE plan is a blueprint of sorts on anticipating a sort of gradstep that orderly disposes the land if it is for agriculture, residential, commercial, industrial, open space, a reserved forest (reserve (like forest land, swamp land, river or lake), a school, a transportation infrastructure (such as a rail line or highways), as well as other purposes that would enable communities within the territory to function properly, safely and productively.

The idea of having a land-use plan for a city or municipality enable it to maintain and manage a growing population, serve the needs of its residents and be able to adjust to a changing landscape.

Executive Order 72 or the Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP) signed by then President Fidel Ramos in 1995 empowers cities and municipalities to continue to formulate or update their respective comprehensive land-use plans and submit them to the local council for approval as a zoning ordinance.

While this law helps local government units (LGUs) chart the future growth of their cities or municipalities, a lot of residential developers planning to secure some of those prospective parcels of land for housing project, often find the process frustrated by local conservative too complicated if not too long.

"Most of the time, developers noted that the land classification is on a case-to-case basis, retail type and price point. Adding to the complication to the fact that existing laws practically presume that all lands are agricultural and environmentally critical, leaving a number of developers clueless on what to do next," says Manny Crisostomo, national president of the Subdivision and Housing Developers Association.

Access to land

Crisostomo explains that access to land has previously been one of the most critical problems that prevent a faster acceleration of housing production by private developers, which is necessary to adequately address the housing backlog in the country.

CRISOSTOMO

"We believe that we now must do something to resolve the struggles and conflicts among stakeholders with respect to the allocation of land resources into various uses," Crisostomo says.

According to him, this will be among the main topics that will be discussed in the SHDA national convention happening from Sept. 16 to 17 in Bacolod City.

"Since Vice President and Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council chair Jejomar Binay will be one of our guests, SHDA will be proposing a redesign and reorientation of the present system of land classification, land conversion and environmental clearance certification to make it rational, macro in approach, organized and primitive," Crisostomo informs.

The national president says that during the two-day convention, Sen. Pia Cayetano and Rep. Rod Valencia will be on hand to present the respective view of both the upper and the lower house regarding the CLUP.

What SHDA will be proposing to its guests is the incorporation of the land classification, land conversion and environmental clearance certification in the Comprehensive Land Use Planning Process (CLUPP) of every LGU nationwide.

In this regard, SHDA strongly supports the passage of a National Land Use Act that will give forces to the CLUPP as the key program component that will ensure a just and equitable allocation of the country's land resources (use in various ways, creating a Technical Land Use Policy Council under the National Economic Development Authority which shall, among others, synchronize, manage and enforce the preparation of a Comprehensive Land Use Plan in every LGU including to regular updating every three years.

Highest authority

"The NLUPC shall, likewise, serve as the highest authority with the power to arbitrate and resolve all disputes and conflicts pertaining to land, including zoning, allocation and mapping of environmentally critical areas," Crisostomo says.

He adds that the Comprehensive Land Use Planning Council (CLUPC) that shall be constituted for each city or municipality will be tasked to prepare an LGU-wide, forward-looking comprehensive land use plan that reflects the economic growth and development of the LGU.

To create a group that would be able to serve and be fair to all parties involved, SHDA is suggesting that the CLUPC be composed of key officials of the LDU, senior regional officers of the departments of Agriculture, Agrarian Reform and Environment and Natural Resources, HUDCC, people's organizations and private development sector.

"What we would like to propose is for the CLUPC to approve the CLUP of the LGU submitted in coordination by the Provincial Development Council, the regional development council and NLUPC. Such CLUP that is to be updated regularly and made available to the public in each LGU," Crisostomo informs.

He says this would greatly improve transparency, minimize bureaucratic red tape and fast track socio-economic development at the local as well as national level.

"Once this is established developers will only have to refer to the CLUP at the LGU to identify sites zoned for housing and thereby facilitating the expeditious negotiation for the purchase or joint venture of such lands with respect to land owners," Crisostomo says.

CHATEAU Elysée entrance is warm and welcoming to unit owners

SIMPLE elegance per functional

A mid-income buyer's . . .

From page B3-1

percent; over P1.35 million to P2 million (13.5 percent); and over P2 million to P3 million (11.5 percent). The Pag-Ibig hotline is 724-4244.

After surveying some financial concerns, choosing a condo unit is your next challenge.

Make sure to pick "breathing" condos. Biochemist and molecular oncologist from de Villa wants condo buyers that the metropolis is full of establishments built with poor ventilation. Poorly ventilated spaces risk accumulating hazardous fumes from cooking and other indoor activities. Furthermore, during hot weather, these spaces can become veritable furnaces.

Japanese Property recently featured a condominium condo integrating natural light and ventilation. Engineers call it "cross ventilation (cannot referring to light, and evenus wind), which could be seen livemost in all DMCI Homes' vertical communities. The Luminarium system was first seen in 2008 in its high-rise Tivoli Garden Residences near the boundary of Mandaluyong and Makati.

DMCI, a seasoned contractor, prides itself in offering good investment value on its buildings, having built a builders developer with 300 architects and engineers and hundreds of laborers who have been with the company for at least five years. It has built the Discovery Garden at the corner of Ross Avenue and M. Vicente Street in Mandaluyong, the Ohana Place in Alabang, Muntinlupa; Magnolia Place in Building Sans Extension in Quezon City; and San Rafa in Pasig City.

Its typical DMCI two-bedroom condo unit would cost between P2.4 million and P3.2 million.

No to pigeon-hole units

Condominium experts explain that an angle-sized condominium home not only provides functional space, but also maximizes of space with the way the utilities and areas are laid out.

Engineer Elmer G. Civil, head of design and construction of DMCI Homes, asserts that the developer has a commitment not to have its families into "pigeon holes or mass housing."

Alfredo Austria, president of DMCI Homes, said it has been the developer's goal to uplift and maintain a respectable and dignified living space for middle-income families, especially young families.

He added that privacy and convenience may also be defined in many other ways. "For instance, in Dumaguete families there are only a maximum of 12 units per floor, uplifting privacy, exclusivity and quietude for its residents and neighbors."

Resort-like ambience

Green and open spaces must be paramount. The transition to the condominium having a resort-like ambience. This is the best vertical community homes to consider for young and growing families. This environment open to for children to play and explore. Most condominiums in the city are molded after traditional building types where you carry out density into the street.

Facilities that encourage physical activity such as pools, ball courts and the like are important to encourage fitness and health-conscious lifestyle in families.

Convenient, thoughtful facilities for families include social halls where one can hold birthday parties for children, and other functions, without having to leave home.

Location is relative to one's needs.

Prime location may not necessarily be important, but of a good location for you and your family is essential. Time, for families just starting out, a condominium unit close to schools, place of work and commercial centers is often the first consideration.

"For starters, a good central location is important, even more perhaps than being in the middle of a place that will not necessarily mean less traffic, or less congestion," Austria said.

COZY living room for the whole family

SMDC's low-rise community in Parañaque unveils newest cluster

COMMITTED TO building a closely knit, exclusive community, Chairman Hiyole, SMDC's residential sanctuary in Parañaque City, located by a meandering creek-cluster on site near Doña Soledad Extension, BOCOR.

The name, appropriately dubbed "Vineyard the Scene," offered guests and investors a chance to experience what it's like to live in Chateau Hiyole by providing an exclusive peek at the model units while enjoying an evening of food and wine while being serenaded by a string quartet.

The Scene, Chateau Hiyole's each and final cluster, is set to officially open by the first half of 2011. Chateau Hiyole project director Gilbert Ang said, "The launch of the new cluster is proof of our commitment to offer and even deliver quality residential projects in our target market. We are all for improving the lifestyle without the vicinity of Bacoor and we are pleased that Avina is just as well-received as the other clusters."

French Mediterranean design

Just 20 minutes away from the Makati Business District, Chateau Hiyole boasts of resulting French Mediterranean design operated within its 4.6-hectare development.

Securing more than half of the property to its valued amenities, including a clubhouse with complete recreational facilities, residents are sure to benefit from the well thought of living space—exquisitely designed from the living room to the kitchen.

It's one-, two- and three-bedroom units exude comfort and freedom of space. Its high ceilings and wide windows make an open and airy atmosphere capped by a magnificent view of the gardens and cool pools.

Move in to your very own haven of privacy and ease at Chateau Hiyole today!

Expect friendly neighbors at Greenhills Heights

HISTORIANS ACCURATELY assess Filipinos as being neighborly in character. The national artist Carlos "Botong" Francisco depicted this humanism visual in a mural, wherein Filipinos helped their neighbors thatch their bahay kubo in another location using bamboo poles. As workers of goodness, the family they have a small basis to the individuals who helped them, underlined the mural.

The spirit of bayanihan may well be alive in the 21st century. Perhaps, it's in the air that lived a closely knit community, with up by a select few families with kids.

Such is the vision for Greenhills Heights, one of the premier developments of No. 1 residential developer Megaworld Corp. With sixty 160 units on offer across its four and one buildings, the company foresees a closely knit community where everyone knows practically everybody else in the neighborhood.

"Since you only have a few neighbors, you'll have that opportunity to build a strong community with them. You will know what business or firm they are engaged in, what type schools they're sending the kids to, which church they are attending and so forth. And since everybody is familiar with one another, there's less chance of theft and other security concerns in a pocket community like Greenhills Heights," Megaworld SVP for Marketing and project head Marsetto Edjudeo Archbold said.

Greenhills Heights is now being constructed across the historic Pinaglabanan Shrine in San Juan City. Its strategic location gives it a particular advantage over other projects. Top schools are nearby including Immaculate Conception Academy, La Salle Greenhills and Xavier School. The Ortigas business district is a short drive away.

The amenities at Greenhills Heights will surely please both adults and youngsters get over the extraordinary bump and ride it to delights. The lagoon-shaped pool will be the venue for many entertaining parties. The playground will be ideal for toddlers to have fun while parents can have their ex-exchange tips on how to take care of the kids. The clubhouse will be the site for even bigger gatherings that will have up to 80 in attendance.

Parents, and even singles, can choose from studio, one-bedroom and two-bedroom units and then look forward to moving in to become members of this exclusive, closely knit community. It's a true sense that your family will thank you for the many years to come.

GREENHILLS can expect a neighborly community at Greenhills Heights.

PR Kitchens Inc.

Breathe easy
in the metro's greenest community.

MANHATTAN HEIGHTS

at Manhattan Garden City
Araneta Center

Live up a life of serene, indulgent ease in a life of grace. At Manhattan Heights. Feeling stress-out at home, where everything else seems so hectic and hungry is only a click of an elevator button away. Unwind above the city in your very own sky garden with gallery nooks and flowers. Enjoy relaxing ways to play in your exclusive fourth-level playground. And discover close to 20 more amenities in the neighboring residential phases. When it comes to your daily commute, green is also the way to go. Your nearest link to the LRT-2 and MRT-3 lies you run down the road. And lets you go places every single day.

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- A four-storey nature-inspired community along Gen. Romulo Avenue in the Araneta Center
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- A sky garden located at the four topmost levels of each Tower
- Low-rise/zero-entry units and one- to two-bedroom homes
- Fourth-level garden deck with a swimming pool complex, jobbing/spa, gym, residences area, entertainment area, outdoor gas, yoga lawn, jacuzzi, playgrounds, two-hour jogging path, landscaped gardens with dining areas, a meeting room with function rooms and a day care center
- Retail establishments and a hotel/retail on the ground floor
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- 2nd Level Main Mall, Trinoma, Quezon, SM Mall of Asia
- Corner Grimaud Plaza, SM San Lazaro, Manila

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2bU LIFESTYLE

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FREE Salt-Crusted Tilapia

How to look taller and more svelte

By Dominique Tio
Contributor

LET'S FACE it—not all of us look like Natalia Vodianova, the Ukrainian supermodel with legs up to here and is so perfectly proportioned that even a garbage bag would look ridiculously good on her.

Like most women, I've always had a beef against my physical structure, as I'm neither short nor tall enough, wide nor voluptuous. I don't know how else it is for everyone, but there are days I find myself staring at a full-length mirror and wishing for Natalia Vodianova's frame.

Then I drink about dieting and going to the gym, and silence about scouring to lose weight. But the result is always the same: my body is unbothered and I doubt I'll ever lose more weight no less I resort to drastic means.

Time goes by my height—or correct how many inches of Cheerio I down, I'm obviously very past the age limit to alter or improve my physical features.

So if almost everything else is ruled out, the only probable way to get a look that would render me taller and thinner is by dressing appropriately.

The golden rule: Run clothes that flaunt our best assets and hides our flaws. Then we can choose from wide, tiered and bed-proof pottery.

Thigh-grazing skirts: Anything thigh grazing, in fact, be it a dress or a pair of shorts that fall around the mid-thigh. Any clothing that shows off the legs gives them additional length and adds to a person's height. Avoid clothes that get cut off awkwardly, like skirts with sleeves that are only 3 inches past the tip of the shoulders, or trousers that end on one's mid-calf.

Pieces that fall on parts where the limbs are biggest will make a person look chunkier than usual.

Monochromatic silhouettes. Thankfully, monochromatic outfits are now back in fashion—black, white, heather grey and nudes. Anything, really, that won't break the body into parts, such as button-two-piece clothes. Now, there's a good reason for you to buy a jumpsuit or romper with a flattering cut for additional leverage.

Good posture and, by extension, sky-high heels. Good posture will always make people look taller and slimmer, and sky-high heels will help women achieve that 1st position (taller body-awaiting move comfortable). The adverse of wedge is a welcome, as it marries comfort, posture and the additional "up-lift."

MORE click to elongate the legs.

WEARING heels will boost your height.

JUMPSUITS for lengthening the frame

Gray expectation

Don a sweater in one of the season's hottest colors: gray

Gray distressed sweater, Topshop; leopard print cotton jumpsuit, Warehouse; silver rhinestone necklace, Forever 21; gray leather leggings, Topshop

Sugar surprise

Add cord lace layer; black always suggests mysterious charm

Black lace bodysuit, Topshop; white-printed/dyed sweater with bow, and denim overalls, both from Forever 21; black leather leggings, Steve Madden

Heart to heart

Foil the kitschy appeal of a heart-print sweater by layering it with other prints

Black and white-graphic print tank top, Folded & Hung; cream heart-print sweater, purple striped kimono skirt, and multi-layered chain necklace, all from Forever 21

Sweet shop

Cover yourself up in cozy knits given a feminine spin

In cloud 9

Bring out the sweetness of an oversized poncho with a cotton candy skirt

Gray leopard print tank top, Forever 21; cream cable knit poncho, Mango; green tulle skirt, black green-bangle, and bib flat shoes, all from Forever 21

Wear it proud

SPOTTED

Beap Top
De La Salle College of St. Benilde
H&M vest, shoes and bracelets, American Apparel tank top, Mango pants, Longchamp bag with Anne Klein scarf

Vanessa Ducut
19 years old, Southridge Xaverian School
"I just randomly mixed-and-matched my clothes"
Tee=store top; H&M skirt, bag and silver bracelet; Topshop shoes, vintage necklace

Kim Garcia
14 years old, Miraculous Medal School
"I usually decide how an image of myself—friendly, elegant, sporty, etc.—for the day and build on the outfit."
Skinny jeans, Bo Peep shoes, Casio wristband, bag, clip used as necklace

Sarah Jil Yoon
17 years old, De La Salle College of St. Benilde
All clothes from Korea

Get hooked

Eye-popping shades

SUPER in dyes

VINYL pier

PRINTS-charming

COMIC road

By Saol Cabal

IT WASN'T enough that our friends from Ray-Ban designed summer to protect our eyes from the sun's harmful rays; they just had to cut (yet again) lovable trends, swapping cool prints on the classic Wayfarer.

After New York subway maps, floral and psychedelic color patterns, comes its Rare Prints series, keeping your eyes looking cooler than ever. The iconic features black and white lines of bold retro inspiration and Ray-Ban Pin edition, colored pins (replaced in keepsake designs. Both lines play with pop culture, classics and fashion.

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That's why there's BETADINE® 7.5% feminine wash.

BETADINE® 7.5% feminine wash is proven effective in killing a wide range of harmful microorganisms** which are likely to proliferate in your feminine area and cause infection when there's excess feminine secretions like during menstruation.

BETADINE® 7.5% feminine wash rapidly relieves feminine itching and irritation* which are common symptoms of infection. Over 10 years of clinical experience and wide use among women of BETADINE® 7.5% feminine wash supports its safety and efficacy in preventing infection.

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Relieves feminine itching and irritation* in just 3 days

**Effective in killing a wide range of harmful microorganisms, i.e. bacteria, fungi, yeast, protozoa, and viruses, including Staphylococcus aureus, Escherichia coli, Pseudomonas aeruginosa, Candida albicans, Trichomonas vaginalis, Herpes simplex virus, Human immunodeficiency virus, Hepatitis B virus, Hepatitis C virus, Cytomegalovirus, Influenza virus, Rotavirus, Adenovirus, Poliovirus, Coxsackievirus, Echovirus, Rubella virus, Measles virus, Mumps virus, Parainfluenza virus, Respiratory syncytial virus, Vaccinia virus, Varicella-zoster virus, Chlamydia trachomatis, Neisseria gonorrhoeae, Gardnerella vaginalis, Mycoplasma hominis, Ureaplasma urealyticum, Treponema pallidum, Haemophilus ducreyi, Shigella flexneri, Salmonella typhi, Salmonella enteritidis, Vibrio cholerae, Yersinia enterocolitica, Campylobacter jejuni, Clostridium perfringens, Clostridium tetani, Clostridium difficile, Bacillus anthracis, Bacillus cereus, Listeria monocytogenes, Streptococcus pneumoniae, Streptococcus pyogenes, Streptococcus agalactiae, Enterococcus faecalis, Enterococcus faecium, Staphylococcus epidermidis, Staphylococcus saprophyticus, Candida albicans, Candida glabrata, Candida tropicalis, Candida parapsilosis, Candida krusei, Candida dubliniensis, Trichomonas vaginalis, Herpes simplex virus, Human immunodeficiency virus, Hepatitis B virus, Hepatitis C virus, Cytomegalovirus, Influenza virus, Rotavirus, Adenovirus, Poliovirus, Coxsackievirus, Echovirus, Rubella virus, Measles virus, Mumps virus, Parainfluenza virus, Respiratory syncytial virus, Vaccinia virus, Varicella-zoster virus, Chlamydia trachomatis, Neisseria gonorrhoeae, Gardnerella vaginalis, Mycoplasma hominis, Ureaplasma urealyticum, Treponema pallidum, Haemophilus ducreyi, Shigella flexneri, Salmonella typhi, Salmonella enteritidis, Vibrio cholerae, Yersinia enterocolitica, Campylobacter jejuni, Clostridium perfringens, Clostridium tetani, Clostridium difficile, Bacillus anthracis, Bacillus cereus, Listeria monocytogenes, Streptococcus pneumoniae, Streptococcus pyogenes, Streptococcus agalactiae, Enterococcus faecalis, Enterococcus faecium, Staphylococcus epidermidis, Staphylococcus saprophyticus, Candida albicans, Candida glabrata, Candida tropicalis, Candida parapsilosis, Candida krusei, Candida dubliniensis, Trichomonas vaginalis.

COOL WEATHER STYLE AT SURPLUS

Sun Picks. Zip up jackets and cool cardigans.

Pastel-colored looking sunbrellas for only P75.00.

Rain or shine, these hooded jackets and knitted caps (pictured with tank tops and shirts will keep you in style even with the sudden change of weather. Wear with skinny jeans for ladies and a slim straight jeans for men.

GREAT FASHION FINDS

Flexibility, thy name is layering. Cool geek one moment, hot hunk the next. Be a quick-change artist no matter what look you're after, and whether it rains or shines!

at SURPLUS

casual

For a boy-next-door vibe, just toss a sweat jacket over a brightly colored shirt.

rugged

Get ready to rough it out in any weather with a statement tee over a long-sleeved ribbed sweatshirt.

hip

Add a striped, subdued-colored sweater to give a sharp finish to a shirt-and-shorts get-up.

While stormy seems to be ahead, this doesn't mean that this should rain on your style parade. The fashion forecast from Surplus: light knits and jackets are the must-haves for the season.

The good news is that you don't have to tote along bulky jackets or unwieldy rain gear as you navigate through unpredictable weather. Lightweight knits are perfect - they can keep you cool on warmer days and you can layer those when the temperature drops. Hoodies and zip up varsity jackets not only keep you warm and dry, but also keep you on the fashion radar.

Wear these with jeans, jeggings, and skinny jeans for ladies and slim straight jeans for men. Better still, accessorize these with stylish scarves (available for as low as P199.00) in solids, stripes, and playful patterns, as well as sleekly designed pastel folding umbrellas for only P75.00

Rain or shine, Surplus keeps you in great style. The Rainy Day collection is available at Surplus, the go-to store this rainy season located at most SM Supermalls.

Bonded scarf in bright colors.

These tuned beffies with graphic designs and fringe accents.

2b LIFESTYLE

Young voices joined in religious harmony

By Jeanelle S. Tayao

A SEMINARIAN, a Philippine Military Academy student and the first woman president of Mindanao State University's student government—they, with other youth leaders from all over the country, made their voices heard at the recent interreligious workshop "yPeace: Youth in Action for Interfaith Dialogue."

Initiated by the US Embassy and facilitated by the Peacemakers' Circle Foundation Inc., yPeace gathered 39 participants, some from as far as Tawi-Tawi, who, aside from representing schools and peace advocacy organizations, also served as spokespersons for their different faiths: Catholic, Protestant, Iglesia Ng Cristo, Seventh-day Adventist, Church of Christ, Islam, as well as indigenous beliefs.

Held Aug. 30-31, the two-day intensive workshop was at Nyal Hotel in Makati, Manila.

In group discussions and creative presentations, participants related personal stories on conflicts in their respective communities, and their hopes for better interreligious communities in the country.

"It's just opening ourselves to something as simple as conversation," said Shiela Stefanie Hansing Lee, 21. "Ignorance breeds fear and causes conflict."

"It's just opening ourselves to something as simple as conversation"

YOUNG US "YPEACE: Youth in Action for Interfaith Dialogue" participants

INTERFAITH on their mandala

GARFIELD BY JIM DAVIS

A. LIPPY BY BIG NORSE

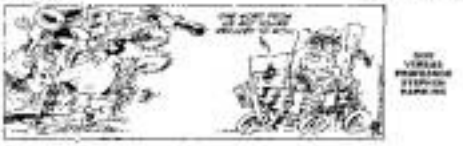
PUGAD BARDY BY TIM LUCAS

DICK TRACY

LOVEHOOTS BY ELIZABETH HOROWITZ

JAMES BOND

DRONE COMEDY BY STEVEN WALRAVEN



BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT

TUDOR BY MARK COLL

SEIN BY DANIEL SHELTON

BIRD MACHINE BY MARK ABRAM

SHERWIN'S LAGOON BY JIM TOOMEY

HOROSCOPES BY FRANCES DRAKE

ARIES (March 21 to April 19) Emotions with partners and close friends can be unpredictable today. Keep options open and avoid making decisions that bring out the worst in others.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) Do whatever you can to make others feel more comfortable. You're in a big, impressionable mood now. You also might apply this to your own looks.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) You're a social star for most of this week. Your response to others is unusually diverse and passionate. (This is the sixth consecutive.)

CANCER (June 21 to July 22) What you can do to improve your relationships with family members? By the same token, what can you do to improve the appearance of others you don't think about this.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22) Communication is an issue for you, and you will, too. Touch and model intelligent exchanges with others. Be mindful.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22) Your social star continues to shine, and you will, too. Touch and model intelligent exchanges with others. Be mindful.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22) Someone who wants to be with you is very much in your corner today. Others might become romantically interested in you, but you're not interested in them.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21) Some of you will fall in love with your boss today. Others might become romantically interested in you, but you're not interested in them.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21) Some of you will fall in love with your boss today. Others might become romantically interested in you, but you're not interested in them.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19) Some of you will fall in love with your boss today. Others might become romantically interested in you, but you're not interested in them.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18) Someone with someone from a different background or different culture is highly likely today. Meanwhile, many of you will just enjoy the beauty of other cultures.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20) Some of you will fall in love with your boss today. Others might become romantically interested in you, but you're not interested in them.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. For more programs go to www.sudoku.com

Solution to previous puzzle

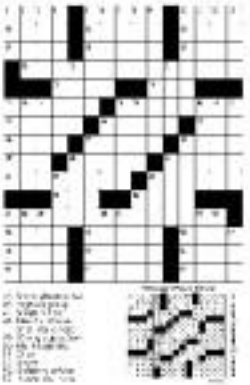
4	9	1	5	3	6	8	2	7
7	5	6	2	8	9	3	4	1
3	8	2	4	1	7	5	9	6
6	4	5	8	2	3	7	1	9
9	1	8	7	6	4	2	3	5
2	3	7	9	5	1	4	6	8
1	6	4	3	7	2	9	5	8
8	7	3	6	9	5	1	8	4
5	2	9	1	4	8	6	7	3

Concepts Sudoku By Dave Green

	5		6				9	
8								4
				9	3			
	6		8					9
	3		4		7			
2			6		1			
			7	1				
1								6
	8				4		7	

Difficulty level ★★★★

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



Freshmen learn to work the runway, set up the dinner table, at *Social Graces* class

By Andrea D. de Guzman
Contributor

"Di 1583 the song?" I asked Nico, one of the students at Ilustrator Academy, his nodded as I prepared to press the play button.

The kids all lined up behind the makeshift runway—an empty space of about a meter in width, lined with chairs. The classroom runway was where the students would present to me everything they'd learned in the past week or so.

And with the first beat of the 1st Runaway Mash up of 2009's greatest hits (running from a Macbook, the kids, in their suits and assisted dresses, strutted the runway and showed off the new skills they'd acquired from the Social Graces class they had attended only a few days ago.

Projecting self-confidence is just one part of the Ilustrator Academy's Social Graces class. Table Manners is a popular subject, with the student learning

Why should you pass the salt and pepper shakers at the same time, and never leave one without the other?

how to set different types of settings (Continental, American, formal and informal), and the behavior associated with such environments.

Why should you pass the salt and pepper shakers at the same time, and never leave one without the other? What is the opposite power period for lunch? What does RSVP stand for? (It's Respondez S'il Vous Plait.)

Also, do you know that memorizing the word "tissue" when introducing rare people in inappropriate (like, "Ishh, I would like you to meet Jane"). You'd sound far less redundant when you say "Ishh, this is Jane"!

More do's and don'ts: You are not supposed to look at a person's hand when you are about to shake it. Or now your hair once resorted of important people when eating through the door; it's considered rude.

STUDENTS Mica Soo and Nicole Reyes doing an exercise on book balancing and conversation (left). Mica shows his very first double knotted tie right after Erica Cooke class.

NICOLE Reyes practicing how to walk and smile for the camera at Ilustrator Academy.

STUDENTS rehearsing their walk to show off what they've learned in Erica Cooke's class.

Through formal classes, students are taught to become refined individuals with heightened consideration for other people. Knowing the proper thing to do in any social or professional occasion will only make their stand out from the throng, and give them an edge in an increasingly erudite, cautious world.

For more information, call (0917) 711-8300. Ilustrator Academy is located at Citystate Strip, Cubi Industria, Libis, Quezon City. Visit www.ilustrator.edu.ph.

A basketball store—and a *barbershop*, too

By Erica Paredes
Circle Buzzer

THE WORD 'Gear' brings to mind things of awesome proportions. They were, after all, the great gods who ruled the earth, according to Greek mythology.

In modern times, basketball play, on-court also be perceived as such—gods and gods who rule the realm of the most loved sport in our country.

Manila has been waiting for a store like Gears, a basketball specialty store that sells, lives, lives and breathes the sport. Not with almost all known brands on the market, most of them with their stand-alone stores, what makes Gears different? Can't one just go to a regular brand sports store?

Not sure, but if you are a trained basketball fan and live and breathe the sport like the owners do, you won't take anything less than this store.

The basketball boutique has the latest in performance footwear, from Nike, Jordan Brand, Adidas, And I to Kow Eve, K1X, Reebok and Converse.

"We are also a go-to spot for special-limited edition releases from some of the brands we carry," says Russel Soriano, one of the owners.

"We cater to different types of consumers, from the 11-year-old kid who just loves to play basketball just for kicks, to the more serious guys who collect sneakers as a hobby."

One of the sources is a recently retired 10-time all-star, nine-time champion NBA player Jeffery Cariaso. If there's a sneaker who knows ball, it is certainly someone like him who has played professionally for 15+ years.

The store also carries shoes up to size 16—which regular shoe stores normally don't carry.

Inspiration

And...there is a barbershop. According to Soriano, the idea of a barbershop cropped up in a conversation Gerlaro had with co-owner Ernesto Tan.

"They were inspired by a barbershop in Oregon owned by Terrell Brandon, who used to play in the NBA. What fascinated them was how everyone who came into the place talked bout all the time."

JEFF Cariaso

JEFF Cariaso's jersey wall, (above) Mike Ilustrator wall

After a few years of talking, planning and studying the market, they finally left Manila was ready for a concept more such as this.

Soriano says, "We're slowly building a loyal [customer base, and they're really enjoying their time inside the shop, whether they're getting their grooming fix, browsing shoes, playing a friendly game of NBA 2K10, or simply hanging out with us."

While you get a haircut, you can surf the net in-store iPad. How's that for something extra?

Being players and fans of the game themselves, the Tiona owners get a lot of themselves and their passion for the sport into the store. They believe there are enough people like them who love the sport deeply, and who can sustain their business. The owners are banking on their personal knowledge and experience of the game to continue living in the know when it comes to what the market wants and needs.

"Once you step inside Titan, you can immediately feel that it has a certain vibe to it, given its distinct Old World simplicity. If you're into basketball and you love the game as much as we do, you'll feel right at home," says Soriano.

While you get groomed, you can surf the net in an in-store iPad!

GROUND floor basketball court

Young voices joined in religious harmony

From page D1

Lao broke barriers in her school when she won the student presidency of Mindanao State University-Iligan, the first woman to do so.

"I discovered dreams dare! I'm not just the president of the Bangsamoro group, but also of the 70 percent Judeo and Christians and indigenous peoples in our school," Lao shared.

Other participants, like seminarian Ernest Hamoon from the University of Santo Tomas, joined the workshop as part of his academic studies.

Others joined the dialogue to share something new with their communities and organizations.

Batuan Obongan is sharing his indigenous dialogue experience with his co-PhDers in Baguio City and Bamda Lao Tibetan of the Graduate Inter-Communal Initiatives plans to "Ilustrate" what he has learned and use this to "directly involve myself in order to help my Moro brothers."

To consolidate these aspirations, participants were asked to formulate action plans—proposals for achievable goals they could implement in their communities.

In the spirit of interfaith peace, each session started with an ecumenical prayer. At their dinner (a religious observance during Ramadan) where a community gathers to break the fast together) served as the workshop's closing ceremony.

Tijesus is just one of the 10 Ilustrator's efforts to encourage the youth to be more proactive to different social issues. Past activities included concerts, summer camps and basketball drives all over the country. The embassy also offers the youth study abroad programs.

CMAG John Nonie, Pixie Segovia, Erroll Miguel G. Villegas and Jovica Ily

Eevee is here

By Mark Bautista
Contributor

JUST LAST year, Eevee was just another college band, hoping to be noticed in a nationwide sampler show in Ilustrator. The Pokemon character-inspired band emerged grand champions of "Search 1-in-1 Soundcloud" competition, beating 15 college bands from all over the country.

Composed of Ernee Villegas on vocals and guitars, Paulo Segovia on guitars, Jerrick Ily on bass and Craig Nonie on drums, Eevee has come out with its debut album, "Pacmanium," under Sony Music, years after its win. With 11 tracks, the album features the hit carrier single, "Ernee Is Gang Ng Girlfriend."

"It's not bullet, it's not outright alternative, it's like anisterna songs, feel-good ... like Michael Bublé. Lourie to finish," said the band. Produced by the same Ilustrator-beats unit now The Itsem banner Buddy Zabala, "Pacmanium" has more music weight to boost.

"Working with Buddy Zabala is a big honor for us!" said Segovia. "He is connoisseur kasi ng sound we have always dreamed of working with him. It was one of the best experiences we had in recording the album didn't feel like work at all."

Other album highlights include "Laramans," "Waiter," "Photographer," "Emphasis," "Become A Fan," "Loading Kiss," "Manure Baby," "Saturday Night" and "Bitch."

"Most of the songs are based on personal experiences and some from other people," said Villegas, who composed most of the songs in the album. "I'm sure most people would relate to the lyrics once they hear them."

Now based in Manila, Eevee members keep themselves busy with gigs, TV appearances, and promotions for the album, which they never thought would happen back in their hometown Davao.

"Life is different here in Manila, but it is such a blessing to be here," said Jerrick. "Every day is a learning experience as we get to know more about the music industry."

With these blessings most unrelated bands can only dream of, plus hard work and passion for music, Eevee is ready to make its presence felt on the music scene.

ARANETA CENTER SPREADS LOVE ON GRANDPARENTS' DAY

Araneta Center will once again pay tribute to all grandparents this coming Sunday, September 12, by providing special treats and freebies at participating establishments. As part of the Center's annual tradition of giving back to the elderly, the Center will have special activities dedicated to the senior set.

Festivities will start with free medical check-ups for grandparents who can present their senior citizen's identification cards. This will start at 10 am and will continue until 3 pm. A roving group of musicians will serenade grandparents who dine at Araneta Center restaurants from 11 am to 2 pm, and then from 6 pm to 9 pm.

A highlight of the day would be special activities for the grandparents of Golden Acres and "Kantinegan si Mario". Both institutions have been serving as home for the elderly who have been abandoned and neglected by their families. Through these institutions, the elderly residents receive dishes, clothing, food, and health care.

From 2 pm to 5 pm, these elderly guests will be treated to songs, dance numbers, games, and specially prepared food. In line with this, organizers are calling on volunteers who want to be part of this special occasion. Those who are interested can register at the Ali Mall and Gateway activity areas from 10 am to 4 pm.

Drink responsibly—how I learned the hard way

By Czar de Leon
Student correspondent,
University of the Philippines

IT'S COMMON sense—one should be responsible with his or her drink so one doesn't end up doing things one might regret in the morning.

Order ate the farthest place he can so he is control where one is drinking. Five, it a dark, so you are less visible to other people; even you tend to forget to watch yourself.

Second, there is also a lot of distracting stimuli. Dancing lights and booming music tend to numb you, so you don't feel the busy inside of you. It a crowded and everybody else around you is going wild, so

Sometimes a high isn't worth it; we'd still want to live with ourselves

naturally you just go along with it.

The first time I got drunk, I was fairly I ended up on hangover. A guy named Martin took good care of me by walking me to the restroom several times, letting me rest my heavy head on his shoulder, and even, finally taking me outside to the parking lot so he could help me throw up—and he wasn't even a friend.

"You do realize you were so vulnerable," he told me months later. "Had I wanted to, I could've taken advantage of you and you could be taken into where. It was ridiculous! Your legs were practically jelly, and it was like you were walking with your eyes closed. It was weird taking care of a stranger. You weren't my responsibility, but at the same time I knew something bad would happen to you if I just left you alone," he said.

He was giving me a sermon after I told him about my second drunken incident, where I was not so fortunate.

Jerk

This time, I texted up with Josh (named Jasper who desperately wanted to make me cry) me. And because I was drunk and more trusting than usual, I let him take me to his car. The implications of this didn't even occur to me at the time.

Thankfully, nothing happened. Strange as it may sound, this is because Jim numerally drove and acts even more drunk and sounds when I'm drunk. The poor guy was already very much in the moment and expecting so much, while I hesitantly thought, "Oh, he's a jerk." talking. And can you take me back to my friends now? They'll be looking for me soon."

Jasper drove from the parking lot to a space more secluded to the club.

"So, drove you?" Martin exclaimed when I got to that part. "He could have taken you anywhere, you know that!"

My friends were already outside the club and looking for me when we got back. A girl friend of mine shook Jasper's hand to get his name, while one of my girl friends scolded me. The next day she continued the lecture. "That guy would've done it with any girl who'd let him. I swerved to preach him to the face!" she said.

Apologies

I spent the next day apologizing to my friends, telling them I genuinely appreciated their concern, assuring them that nothing happened and that from now on I'll take good care of myself.

I also searched for Jasper on Facebook (my friend got hold of his last name) and blocked him.

This isn't a story I'm particularly proud of. In fact, when it dawned on me what had happened, I asked my friends not to tell others about it. But in time, I realized I didn't have anything to be ashamed of.

My only mistake was, I wasn't responsible with my drink. But I wasn't the one who tried to take advantage of another person's vulnerability. I who realized I could have harmed myself or me, and I wouldn't have been able to defend myself.

I can't say I'm thankful that this happened, but I needed to learn my lesson. I have since learned to never go over my limit, especially but in public places where strangers can easily whisk me away and have their way with me.

I totally get the high and liberation that comes with drinking—especially to clubs where you can forget all your cares and lose control as you dance the night away. Isn't that what youth is for, after all?

But sometimes the high is not worth it. Sooner or later, we'll have to get back to reality. And what we do, we want to still be able to live with our selves.

Visit the author at http://czardeleon.blogspot.com.

McDonald's and RMHC champions reading in 100 public schools

From McDonald's Chowtherapy did count. As a result of the successful Chowtherapy Campaign, McDonald's and its charity arm, the Ronald McDonald House Charities (RMHC) has donated over 100 Bright Minds Read (BMR) readers to 100 public elementary schools in 50 K+ including Manila, San Juan, Pasig, Makati, Parañaque, Las Piñas, Malabon, Navotas, Mandaluyong, Pasay, and Quezon City.

The first ever McDonald's Chowtherapy Campaign was an initiative to raise P1 million pesos for RMHC and BMR. With every McDonald's Chowtherapy good meal, P1 was automatically donated to RMHC for the benefit of its Reading program, BMR.

Bright Minds Read, a program in partnership with the Department of Education, provides reading modules to public schools all over the country to help students improve their reading skills. Each BMR module consists of 10 storybooks, a teacher's manual and student worksheets, teaching beginning reading, as well as improving comprehension and critical thinking skills, in an easy and engaging manner. Aside from the nuts core of modules, a BMR Training Program is also on-going for the teachers of the beneficiary schools, equipping them with additional necessary reading skills that would benefit thousands of public school students.

Armed with both a mission and a promise to uplift the lives of Filipino children, McDonald's and RMHC continues its fight against illiteracy by championing reading to 100 public schools in the region.

Entrepreneur launches first-ever student challenge

ENTREPRENEUR MAGAZINE dares college students to turn their bright ideas into big profits with the first-ever Entrepreneur Student Challenge as it stands its mettle year of championing entrepreneurship among Filipinos. Budding entrepreneurs who will take on the challenge have a chance to be featured in Entrepreneur magazine and win a cash prize of P100,000.00 to help start their business ventures and other operating costs.

Students enrolled in colleges and universities in Metro Manila can join this competition either as an individual or as a team with a maximum of six members by sending a business plan to mc.negotiations.manila@entrepreneur.com.ph on or before Sept. 30. The proposed business can be in any field and must require a total initial capital of less than P1 million. The formula for business plans is available in the Entrepreneur Student Challenge mechanics page in the August issue of Entrepreneur Philippines.

Business plans will be judged according to the following criteria: completeness of the business plan, soundness and viability of the business plan, efficient use of available resources and innovation.

The best business plan will win P100,000.00 cash to be used solely as capital for the proposed business. The winning team will also get additional prizes from Authentic Suitcase, Mike Yigo, Dada Bonnie, souk of Cebu, Love Manila, 060 Limousine, Sun Sun Wifi, Neo, Bed Interiors Collive and Spa. Winners will be announced in the November issue of Entrepreneur and will be awarded in the November.

Grab this opportunity to turn your business idea into an actual business. Join the Entrepreneur Student Challenge now! For more information, grab a copy of the August issue of Entrepreneur or visit www.entrepreneur.com.ph.

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Check out this year's restaurants!

It's time to protect your dreams

Dreams of Giving Back

"My mother showed me the best attitude towards money, which is prudence. She also taught me to see money to do good things. After all, much has been given to me and it is only right that I give something in return. But for me to continue giving, I need to grow my money wisely. Good thing I get good financial advice from my advisors."

Dreams for My Son

"You have to know what is important to you, and starting early is the way to go. Now that my son's future is secure, I'm so happy to know that whatever happens to me, he would do anything he wants. So it really pays to start investing yourself and your loved ones early."

Dreams for My Future

"Even before I entered the entertainment industry, I saw myself retiring at a young age. It may be a change of career, or doing other things that I have always wanted to pursue. For instance, I want to have my own business someday. It is so exciting to think about the future if you know you're prepared and secured."

Dreams of My Own Family

"In a few years, I see myself being married. I want to see my kids grow up, and I want to be beside my wife through thick and thin. We are not going to be young forever, so I am now saving and investing for that chapter in my life. I want to protect their dreams, as I have to be ready for anything."

Dream of Financial Freedom

"Can I say that I am financially free? YES, yes I can. But I will invest in things that will matter in the future. I keep on saving up, so I can continue to be confident about my and my family's future. It's time to create the life we've always wanted to live. No time like today, no place like the present to start. Again, it's time!"

Want to protect your dreams? Ask Lucy on ilovetime.com.ph or talk to a Sun Life advisor.

Sun Life Financial

Call 849-9888 or visit facebook.com/sunlifephil

It's time!

super LIFESTYLE
Editor Thelma Sevan San Juan Subeditor/Editor Pam Pastor

SUPER EXCLUSIVE

Super date with Bekimon

His YouTube videos have thousands and thousands of hits. He has three Facebook pages, two of them are full. But there's more to this Internet sensation than just numbers

By Pam Pastor
Photos by Jil Lejano

I FELT like a blind date. Or okay, an eyeful.
You were full of expressions. After all, you,

PLAYING BADMINTON IN STYLE AT SPORTS CENTRAL

With its fast pace, light equipment, and countable camaraderie, badminton has become a sport of choice for many of us. In fact, the badminton craze hit the country some years ago, and from the looks of it, many still consider it a way to unwind and stay fit.

Sports Central has all the right gear to keep you on top of your game from Kason. There are racquets made of ultra thin carbon fibers, shoes with anti-twist soles, and padded backpacks with small and large compartments to keep you organized as you play. It also has shirts and shorts that keep you cool on the courtside with its fun designs and Dri-Fit Technology that pulls away sweat to keep you dry and comfortable.

These Kason badminton items are available at Sports Central stores at SM City Manila, SM City Baguio, SM City Fairview, the SM Mall of Asia, and SM City North EDSA.

Lightweight Kason badminton racquet.

This pewter blue Kason rubber shoe provides good comfort and style.

This pewter blue Kason backpack will keep your gear and personal items up pronto.

This pretty in pink Kason tee for ladies is not only stylish but high performance.

The badminton shirts and shorts by Kason have the Dri-Fit technology to keep you dry and comfortable.

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A weekly directory of the country's best establishments

Where to Stop Where to Go

Chi, The Spa offers 'Chi Retreat Package'

BEFORE THE holiday rush begins, find a personal sanctuary of rest and relaxation with the "Chi Retreat Package" exclusively offered at Shangri-La's Mactan Resort and Spa, Cebu. Unparalleled luxury awaits guests booking this package as they are pampered with a minimum of two nights stay at one of the resort's luxurious rooms, coupled with opulent treatments at Chi, The Spa.

With rates beginning at P18,000++ per night, the Chi Retreat Package includes room accommodation, daily buffet breakfast, a Chi Balance Massage, Chi Element Facial, Chi Skin Polish Treatment, complimentary use of the Chi water garden, Access to the Health Club including the whirlpool, steam, sauna and gym, complimentary broadband Internet access, hand dry nails and scheduled motivational daily activities complete a truly invigorating experience.

The Chi Balance Massage is a 90 minute energizing treatment that stimulates the yang and relaxes the yin. With the use of pure oriental elements oils and acupressure, the treatment focuses on a combination of the three elements: earth, wood and fire to achieve clarity and peace of mind. The Chi Element Facial is a 45 minute treatment that makes use of an exotherapy botanical and herbal infusion to awaken the energy channels of the face for more luminosity and easier beauty. The Chi Skin Polish is a signature treatment that launches the body with a rich blend of mineral salts and citrus oils to reinvigorate the skin.

The Chi Retreat Package is offered from now until Dec. 23. A surcharge of P5,000++ per night applies on Dec. 24-31. For inquiries and reservations, please call (032) 231-0288 or reservations@shangri-la.com. Guests may also visit Celebrations at the 2nd Floor of Ermelinda 3 in Makati City.

Microtel nets highest guest satisfaction rating in the US

MICROTEL INNS and Suites, an international chain of hotels under Wyndham Worldwide, logged an unprecedented ninth straight highest overall guest satisfaction score for Economy/Budget hotels segment according to the J.D. Power and Associates 2010 North America Hotel Guest Satisfaction Index Study released recently in the United States.

In its 14th year, the study measured overall hotel guest satisfaction across six hotel segments: economy, upscale, mid-scale, luxury, and extended stay. A total of seven key measures are examined within each segment to determine overall satisfaction: reservations, check-in/check-out, guest room, food and beverage, hotel services, hotel facilities, and cost and fees.

"Microtel Philippines is extremely proud yet humbled to be part of this recent recognition. That's because I assure you, that all Philippine Microtel hotels surpass the Microtel chain standards in the US. This achievement certainly strengthens the brand equity of Microtel in the world," boasts Anne Vitor de Rosario, president and CEO of Microtel Philippines.

Herndon - Village, California-based J.D. Power and Associates is a global marketing information services company in key business sectors including market research, forecasting, performance improvement, consulting, Web intelligence and customer satisfaction. The company's quality and satisfaction measurements are based on responses from millions of consumers annually.

For more information, log on to www.microtel.ph or call 899-7171 or 09.17.4883869.

PDI SET TO HIGHLIGHT CHEFS ON PARADE

Chefs on Parade featured recently their agreement with one of the country's leading newspapers - the Philippine Daily Inquirer (PDI). Inquirer enjoys more than 50 percent of market share and regularly tops readership surveys. It remains to be a credible source of information. The recipe cooking committee of CDP is ecstatic about the partnership with Inquirer. Inquirer agrees to give CDP all support and special features to highlight the 2011 event. Inquirer is the official and exclusive broadsheet media partner of Chefs on Parade. The contract signing was held at the multi-purpose hall of the PDI office in Makati. Present during the contract signing, from left: Inquirer head of corporate affairs Lisbeth Sempio; HRAP's assistant treasurer Ty Lucio III; Inquirer SVP for sales and marketing Rose Nieto; CDP vice chair Emiliano Pimentel; and CDP ways and means/PR and publicity committee chair Jill Tantiangco

WATERFRONT INSITEL LUNCH HOSTING

Shown during the event are Cebu Tourism Association of Tour Operators vice president, Myla Mohammad (group sales manager, Waterfront Hotels and Casinos); Lincoln Chua (General Manager, Waterfront group events); Waterfront Insular Hotel and Casinos, Antonette Mears (sales director, Waterfront Cebu City Hotel and Casino); Marcial Ramos (marketing communications manager, Waterfront Cebu City Hotel and Casino) and Pi-An Yu (food tour guide).

Cinnabon offers new Chocolate Pecan Twisty Stix

NOW WHO COMPARES to a hot, fresh, sweet, delicious Cinnabon Stix and they're even better when we put a twist on them. That's why from Sept. 13 through Nov. 14, Cinnabon guests can indulge in the new Chocolate Pecan Twisty Stix. Chocolate Pecan Twisty Stix features two Cinnabon Stix twisted together, drizzled with chocolate syrup and sprinkled with pecan bits. They're also infused with our signature Makes Cinnamon to give them a taste, aroma and visual appeal that's out of this world. "The highly anticipated Chocolate Pecan Twisty Stix allows us to carry on our tradition of offering the same great Cinnabon taste in a totally-new-to-you form," said Mike Whitlock, senior vice president for international operations for Focus Brands Inc., Cinnabon's parent company of Cinnabon. Visit their bakeries at 3SB Mall of Asia, 3SB North Edsa, Robinsons Galleria, The Podium, Trinoma, Shell-North Luzon Tarlac Hypermart, Shell-South Luzon Starmall Alabang and Coffee Bar Pedro and experience the twist of Chocolate Pecan Twisty Stix.

Microtel Hotels · Resorts

Filipino dish with a twist

By Marlet D. Salazar

FILIPINO FOOD is a mix of different influences by different countries and each region offers a specialty often duplicated in other places. Even with the influx of various international cuisines, Filipinos still always crave for scrumptious dishonorable. Forty years Red Crab's Mirasago House at Mckinley Hill, tries to duplicate each region's food specialty and more. With the help of chef Alex Nemenzo, each cuisine gets a twist to satisfy the discriminating Filipino palate.

The Seafood Platter first up to its name and is beautifully crowned with grilled fish, shrimp, and squid, mussels, clams, and of course, crabs. This dishes one of the bestsellers and enthusiastically recommended by chef Alex and Red Crab Mirasago House. Crabs is of course the main offering of the restaurant. Typhoon Butter Crab is literally swimming with fried garlic much like how crabs bury themselves in mud during a typhoon to prevent themselves. The garlic brings out the mouthwatering taste of the crabs. The classic Chinese Steamed Crab dish is always present to Raymund Magdaleno's chain of restaurants including Cantoon and it can't be absent at the Red Crab Mirasago House, as always Seafoods Crab serves fills the palates with sweet and rich taste savored in the mouth.

Red Crab Mirasago House is located at Metro Plaza, Mckinley Hill, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City.

Weekend Roast at Market Cafe

FOR INTENSIVES in September, set a date with old friends or treat the family to a delicious meal in Quezon Province Cuisine Manila with The Market Cafe's Weekend Roast. For lunch or dinner, diners can choose from a variety of traditional roasted cooked in various ways from one. Diners can taste the homemade coffee cupcakes and the delightful dessert in the Market Cafe's Bread Workbench, and indulge the cool down in all of us chef Anne feasts up the kitchen with exotic lunch specialties every Saturday, featuring such dishes as lamb kebabs, lamb shank, lamb ribs and the superb Sunday spreads, such as bicho, crispy pata, lechon kawali and roasted lechon. Forget about diets, make Saturdays and Sundays meal days at Market Cafe. For reservations and inquiries: call 241-1234.

Experience the 'Taste of Asia' at Grand Regal Hotel

GET READY to be treated to a banquet of delights featuring the gastronomic cultures of countries from Thailand to Indonesia and from Singapore to Japan, Vietnam and more, all showcasing the diversity and refinement of the cuisines available in Grand Regal Hotel's "Taste of Asia" lunch and dinner buffet from Sept. 1 to 31. The attractive daily menu gives a tantalizing array of the amazing flavors of Asian dishes which ranges from three appetizers, soups, mixed green salads, three mains entrees, as well as vegetables and desserts. The soups components range from seafood like shrimp, squid and softshell type of fishes, beef, chicken, and pork. There is surely something for almost every taste which conveys the tingle food sense of Asia. It is like traveling the Far East and savoring the unquenchable rich aromas in each one, the fresh ingredients speak for themselves. Desserts offer a unto a scrumptious of cakes and bountiful fresh fruits. Priced at only P950 per person, inclusive of tax. Kids below 9 years old get 50 percent discount and senior citizens and persons with disabilities (PWD) enjoy 20 percent discount. For more information and reservation, the "Taste of Asia" lunch (11:30 a.m. to 2:p.m.) and dinner (6 p.m. to 10 p.m.) buffet at Grand Regal Hotel Davao can be a delightful surprise. Call (082) 235-1888 and (082) 300-8888 for reservations.

Have a groovy Grandparents Day at Dusit Thani Manila

GRANDMA HON grandpa Bob and amazing dunk who! when you were playing basketball? Reminisce how those glamorous grandma looked when you were cheering those up! best tone top they were wide dancing the night away with your! Celebrate your grandparents on Grandparents' Day Sunday Sept. 12 take grandma and grandpa to Dusit Thani Manila for the grooviest Grandparents' Day they'll never forget! Treat them to the Sunday Family Executive Brunch and feast on the widest array of scrumptious and authentic dishes, live cooking stations, heavenly desserts and various liquor signature beverages that include free flowing sparkling wine, Japanese Genmicha, Pandan juice and red iced tea in a head of the month's most renowned Asian delights. Now the tickets fare specially celebrated, Lotus Japanese Restaurant, Food Court Italian Restaurant, Royal Tea Beverages and Basic All-Day Dining areas offers international buffet dishes. Available for only P1,000 net for adults, P600 net for kids aged 6 to 12, and free of charge for kids aged 5 and below. Plus a surprise entertainer the entire family would truly enjoy! Join in on the fun, take lots of snazzy pictures and capture priceless moments with entertainment and surprises. For inquiries and reservations, please call 807-3000 ext. 3888.

Rainy days are magical at Lancaster Hotel Manila

RAINY DAYS can be so gloomy. But before you say "Blah, blah, go away!", consider that there is also a time to lay low and the most ideal place to spend it with you take advantage of Lancaster Hotel Manila's "Rainy Days Magic" promotional package.

From Aug. 15 to Oct. 15, book an overnight stay at superior suite for only P2,788 nett per night and enjoy a special breakfast buffet while it's raining. Stay one round of net entry at Wine Lounge, unlimited use of the internet, and special giveaways. And should the whispering fog hit, there are also scheduled shuttle service to 3 Major shopping malls. Lancaster Hotel Manila is conveniently located at Gloria Boulevard in Mandaluyong City. The modern hotel offers all-inclusive accommodations with its 185 hotel rooms, as well as the suites, executive, deluxe, and Lancaster suites. Each suite room provides a bevy of amenities which includes complete dining and kitchen facilities, cable network television, HBO HDO telephones, individually controlled air-conditioning, hot and cold water, and broadband internet access to every guest room. For more information call (632)532-1818, fax (632)531-1888, or log on www.lancasterhotelph.com or e-mail reservations@lancasterhotels.com.ph.

Brazil's national cocktail at the Gumbrinus Bar

GAMBRINUS BAR's drink of the month this September in Brazil's national cocktail Caipirinha. Caipirinha (small lifted sugarcane alcohol, sugar and lime are the basic ingredients of this zesty drink. Have a glass or more and enjoy at, canapés at P130 ++ per piece. To complete the mood, Pampered Bulls will sing your favorite bossa nova tunes. Gambrinus Bar is located on the lobby of InterContinental Manila. It is open from 11 a.m. to 1 a.m. Enjoy its cozy setting and the magnificent view of the peninsular garden. Catch live evening performances by rising acts. As a la la la lineup of top notch performers and good drinks always a must for guest's pleasure. For more visit us, please call 793-7000 local 774.

Nandana Boracay at the Philippine Travel Mart 2010

NANDANA BORACAY was one of the most visited booths in the recently concluded 21st Philippine Travel Mart held last Sept. 5-7 at the Magsaysay Hall, SM Megamall. Opening this December, Nandana Boracay is located on Station 2, nestled over a 2.5 hectare lot and is made up of 220 rooms, with 33 rooms of beach front. Nandana is a tranquil luxury all-inclusive resort with well-appointed rooms and suites, gourmet restaurants, boutique, spa, and bar. The hotel also features a 250-square meter swimming pool, spa, day care center, housekeeping and laundry, wine decks with concept, in room safe, minibar, 24-hour room service, satellite/cable color LCD TV, refrigerator, and 24-hour security service. For more information and reservations, contact the Manila sales and reservations office at tel. nos. 726-0060 to 726-4109 local 11 and 12; telefax 726-4090; mobile 0917-902-0280; e-mail: dadsmanila@nandanaboracay.com and visit nandanaboracay.com.

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Hotel Victoria
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Hotel Zenith Tower
Hotel Zenith Tower Pension
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Hotel Zenith Tower Suites Pension
Hotel Zenith Tower Suites Pension

Super date . . .

Nasubaybayan niya ang kanyang Twitter *na mga tweet noon.*

Pumapag-IBIG

like thousands of other people, had seen a lot of his videos. You stalked him on YouTube, on Facebook, on Multiply. You Googled him. He's hilarious, he made you laugh.

Would he make you laugh as soon as he walked into the room? Would he wear that crazy pink swing? Would he come in those low pants, the pair he donned for Would He Bring? getaway?

You had high hopes. You knew you'd get along.

But the person who walked into the restaurant was not Bekimon. And Jonakin, his YouTube partner in crime, was nowhere in sight.

Boy's Jessy Bautista sat beside you. He's quiet, he seemed shy. You were not expecting that.

You did what you could to draw him out, to help put him at ease. You dropped a few words, got words, the very same words that have brought him fame. He responded, he laughed. Soon, he was talking to you like you were old friends.

Soon, you realized Boy's not more to Boy than Facebook fans and YouTube hits.

Dark childhood

Boy's quiet what he calls his "super dark childhood" in Dumaguete. He hardly was your first parents' search what made his life an exhibit difficult. His hobbies did.

When he was 12, he seemed that older sister found appeared on his hair. His elders had viewed them off as one. But soon, the white spots became white patches. And they began to spread all over his body.

"Ano ano?" his classmates asked him. "Sakit ba?" they inquired with. "Nakakahawa?" "Kumagat?" "Multo?" The more answers just kept coming out of his mouths.

One day in school, Boy was asked to lead The Pledge Oath. As the middle of it, some students shouted, "Ano ako? Huwag ka dyan! Makakahawa ng mga sakit ang pangit mo!" Boy finished the oath with tears streaming down his face.

When students came to their classrooms, his classmates would kick him into the lessons down. Yoga mats were left with no choice but to look like they told him to. He didn't want them to hit him.

What they thought turn out to was actually vitiligo, a chronic disorder that causes patches of skin to lose their pigment. On some, there Michael Jackson was diagnosed with it.

Boy did not fight it. "I embraced it. I guessed, God if you really want me to be white, make me white." Days time, his skin reversed not.

Despite the bullying, Boy did well in school, graduating valedictorian in grade school, then in high school.

Corn lande

Boy was 17 when he left Puerto Galera. He headed to Manila to fulfill a promise to his mother: to do what she wasn't able to do, to get a college diploma. He commenced his scholarship for four years at Centro Escolar University where he studied Mass Communications.

He was active in theater and was the vice president of the Dramatic Guild. He was a choreographer. He taught jazz and hip-hop. He was a member of the Chorale. Among He graduated cum laude. Five times honors, Boy has three medals.

After college, from his go of his dreams of becoming a TV writer when he found out the salary wouldn't be enough for him to live on and help his family out. Instead, he worked as office manager in a modeling agency.

There he worked in a call center. There he started a photography business with a partner who later ran off with their money and left him with nothing but debt to pay.

Jonakin — yes, his YouTube nickname — helped him through that difficult time. They had met three years before in Puerto Galera and had stayed friends. Boy returned to his call center life, now with Jonakin.

It was around this time that the word "Sipsuran" hit the country like a plague. After a conversation about it with friends, Boy wished the term "Bekimon" and posted this Facebook status:

"Bekimon: noun: isang bakla, bakaang bakla, falaking bakla na bardrobe, gumamit ng gay lingo na kung minsan ay bakla lamb, and also attributes nya nakmukhang."

The status spread fast on Facebook and Twitter. Boy said, "Nakita ako ng aming common ng mga tao

Face to face with Bekimon

By Jason Dagdon, Piero Pastor and Tobin Yap

WHAT WERE things like for you as a young gay boy?

Sumpain yung tanong! Iaminating bakla, nagpapanty ng nagsabi pero noong mga bata ito sinusubo nila, "Bading, bakla!" Je ja ako nasasaktan nun. Pero nung pumapasok na ako, nakakaintindi ito na yung problema ng pagiging bakla ito, problema ito na yung pagiging pangit ito noon. Dagdag!

How was life in college for you?

Ang hirap talaga ng college life ko. Imagining yung mga nakakatanda ng kapwa pero, Bekimon ito 'yong sinsembi nakukuha na sa pangarap ito. Kahirap ito ayaw na ibuche ng Diyos. Kaloka nga ako ng two days or three days bukong nagbibirthday yung magsasabi ng numa ko.

You worked in a call center—what's the weirdest call you've gotten?

Sobrang weird. Yung nagtatanong ako ng TV Host usually may mga na-interview na TV na call ko: "What do you see on the TV?" sabi: "I see my f*cking call on my f*cking TV!" (laughs) Ito pala ang sadistic tips nung inflection mga! Sabi ko: "How about turning on your TV so you can see something?" (laughs) Mayroon pa ako: "Mr/ms, would you mind if I ask you, are you a Filipino?" "No, I am not a Filipino, I am a Latino ako!" Mayroon pa siyang: "Mr/ms, what's your e-mail address?" "My e-mail address is sexy@hotmail.com!" (laughs) Hay Gobanon nung Lordes! Di mon lang nagpag proud na Filipino.

Tell us about Jonakin.

Nagsimula kami sa pagmamasahe, nagsisipag ikuskos ka sa labas lahat. We were very close. We were more than best friends. Ako close pa sya nya sa aswang to tawa sa akin. Nagpa-call center burning magkasama. Magkasama kami sa bahay. Ang isang ako, isang din siya. Pag di ako nagpang, ako 'ne siya nagpapang. Kaya ba-lansing akoosak, nagpapagalitan kami ng bote tapos nanalo parehas. Kung si Jonakin mabalig magpalaro sidor kaloka nung unang pang Bekimon. Bali nung gikatu akoosak ako tapos bigla siya akong manang: "What are the three lines of sinchon?" Tapos nakaka dasi at nagtatanong ako nung singaot ko. Bali siya, 'ay, nemen, nakakahiya naman!"

What happened between you and Jake? Why did he leave?

We had a misunderstanding a couple of months ago and he left. Nakakalungkot yung mga nawala samin na dating sa morning magkasabay ng bebey kasi we complement each other. What makes me sad is I no signed nung the time, 'ay, ondito ako sabihi sa pagbabakasan and I should be able to share that with him kasi nung no both ko to as kanya. Kung hindi siya magkasal ang chandoya na para, wedding Bekimon. Hahahahahah. Everywhere I go: "May si Jonakin, cruise na?" Parang ito na ang pinaka-mga na-miss na nya?

What's the new Jonakin?

Hahaha *(laughter. Laughs)* Jakenjan.

How did you find the new Jonakin?

Ang pinaka-unang nakita ko sa kanya ay sa pic ni Facebook ko. Ito si Jonakin, dating lang sa mga Facebook messages. Isa siya sa mga unang di na nagmemessage. Pag ako ni Jonakin I, dyej yung nagcomment sa akin. O kita nya, mood inyong meme, chinonkan chanelyn. Pero jinnahanahi siya ako kung nasa-saan, ofmakita niya ako sa comments.

When did you realize you were popular?

Date time, nagkakaroon ako ng kapuna-puna may mga bating hatdang high school, yung mga nakakabasa ng nakakabuyla nakaka-'Ay'-k sheets, nakakatuwa mga bagets, seemingan: "Mukha! Mukha! Pinsan! Pinagpapantasyahan ka ng mga bagets!" Ang alin ito kasabihi. I, dyej yung nagcomment sa akin. O kita nya, mood inyong meme, chinonkan chanelyn. Pero jinnahanahi siya ako kung nasa-saan, ofmakita niya ako sa comments.

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Did you think that video would take you this far? Where you were child, did you ever dream of fame?

Hindi. Hindi ko alam yung reaction ko nanggang ngayon. Hmmmhmhmh *(hesitates and thinks)*.

What about all those people who were bullying you—are they trying to befriend you on Facebook now?

Oo. Okay lang naman sa akin. Diba yan every anniversary. Happy anniversary sa akin. I did not hold it against them. I held no grudges. Kita ang nawalang nanay ko sa akin. Kung anong nanawang gawin sa iyo ng tunda, huwag nang gawin sa tunda. Isaid nagiging kaibaid ka na sila. Hala ahong binoculars. Nagpapasalamat pa ako dahil kung hindi dahil sa kanila, hindi ako magiging ganito. Isaid ako nagsisipag ng mabuti. Isaid ako nagsusulat ng mga kanta. Isaid ako nagsusulat ng kwento.

How has fame changed your life?

Pag ano nawa ako sa mga bakla ngayon, dic: "Bekimon, how ka yan?" Sakaanito na pag-usapan si Bekimon. Pero di na nasa ako pala-kaibigan eh. Sa tono pa ng mga makiyam ako, hindi lang bakla. Makikita lang ako ng mga bakla. Nung mga nakaraan pumunta ako sa Boracay, pero ang pinagpapantasyahan nila ako ay yung mga straight guys. Kung ano-ano ang mga nakakapagsabi ng mga bagay na ganun. Kung ano-ano ang mga nakakapagsabi ng mga bagay na ganun.

Ano ang mga nakakapagsabi ng mga bagay na ganun?

Mga "Bekimon, pwede magpa-picture?"

How has fame changed your life?

Bekimon crash course

Don't speak Bekimon? Here's a crash course from Mudak Bekimon

Tagalog translation: Mukha akong tya ang pangit ng gumawa ng Bekimon ang sabi ng aking

English translation: You're driving me crazy. Your girlfriend is so ugly, she looks like Shrek.

Lalak

Variations: lalac

What it means: mad

Example: Kung Tommy Lee crosses na sa kanakuha na ng light, nasa relationship dahi-dahil.

Tagalog translation: Kung gay ka ka na, kumakuha na ng light, nasa relationship dahi-dahil.

English translation: If you're hungry, eat a little. The food's in the set.

Malatsong peacock

Variations: malatsong peacock

What it means: fine or anyone who likes clothing and fashion

Example: Malatsong peacock ka. Ma' Blog mo kung ang

Tagalog translation: Mahilig ka sa damit, ang ganda ng mga damit mo

English translation: You like clothes. Your blog is beautiful because of your clothes.

H&M

What it means: Hindi na naman si net kasi

Antonym: MAM (masculine ang dating at very bold)

Example: Jill kaya. H&M.

Tagalog translation: Si kaya. parang ng

English translation: That guy's not butch

GL

What it means: Girlie tong ni just beauty

Example: Bagsi-bak ka siya. ganyan lang ang mga GL, bitch

Tagalog translation: Bakla ka siya sa parang lang

English translation: I just told just by using my beauty

Some Bekimon rules:

The 3 rule: Add 3 to words. For example, ganun becomes jumanganun and mean becomes jumakin.

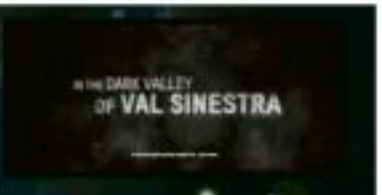
The 47 rule: Use 47 to replace the first letter of the word. For example, Lengget becomes nganggget.

The Famous Names rule: Play with the names of famous personalities and he's them into new words. Shane Dribe—emmy. Haggards: the boss-haggard. Kung Fu Fighting—dance-dance. Ate Sad from the word "Anong" Pero Ba Man from pare.

super LIFESTYLE

Getting Lost In Val Sinestra

And why you and your friends should, too



By Dale Yang
Contributor

WHENEVER someone tags me on Facebook, I normally ignore it, figuring that it's probably just trying to sell me something. However, when my other friends who were tagged recently on a post kept commenting on how "FREAKING COOL" the post was, I had to see it for myself.

The link led to a site that merely said "Lost in Val Sinestra." I had to load it up on my laptop because it was a Flash-based application, but it was really worth it. So worth it that I will be annoyingly cryptic and won't divulge details that might spoil the experience for you.

Here are the top 20 reasons we think you should get lost in Val Sinestra:

1. Your curiosity has probably been whetted by now. What or who is Val Sinestra? It sounds like it could be a villain's name on a cheesy telenovela. It's so much better than that, we promise.

2. It can tell whether you're a good kisser or not. Seriously, it can.

3. Val Sinestra will make you think twice about that next road trip with friends.

4. It'll leave you wondering how the whole thing was done.

5. And, if you're an observant and you know how it was actually done, you'll end up wishing you thought of it first.

6. Yes, the twists really do it.

7. It'll provide energy and some entertainment on your next drinking jamp with friends: Hook up your laptop to a big-screen TV, turn off the lights and watch it.

8. It'll amaze you when you find out that the whole thing is just a Xanax telecom company's online marketing ad for a TV service.

9. After the shock wears off, you'll want to do it again, each different friends this time.

10. You'll rejoice it so much that you'll be as annoyingly cryptic as we are when you insist that your friends try it out right now.

By Christine Ysabel Bautista
Contributor

WHEN people formulate plans to see the world, the usual choices are to grow old/burn and lift heavy backpacks or try to save the world and join the Peace Corps. Alexei Perry and Dan Boeckner, the husband-and-wife duo that comprises indie/art-rock act Handsome Furs, went another route; they formed a band and decided to live on the road.

The Canadian band, which recently took their globe-trotting act to local rock club Route 196 last Aug. 24, has consistently been on tour since 2006. While a bit of couples would find it a nightmare to be on tour together, the pair is having the time of their lives. "It's so funny because people always assume the worst of that dynamic," said Perry, who was apparently in search of Filipino pop records from the 1950s. "Dan and I are both crazy workaholics and we just feel so lucky to be able to travel. It really works because we want the same things out of life."

Handsome Furs takes breaks whenever Boeckner has to join the rest of Wolf Parade, his whenever they run, they play rock clubs in scenes of the world most Western bands avoid. Before playing the Rhythmnnik show in the Philippines, Handsome Furs had rest stops in Wuhan, China and Myanmar.

"We've sort of an unusual band for that," said Perry. "A lot of bands sort of have touring because it's grueling and it's exhausting. I love it more than anything. We get to come to Manila. How amazing is that?"

The couple, which had their own travel/rock documentary show on Chile called 'Indie Asia,' seem to be in it so they can go around. "I never had the money to travel. I never had the money to go see Malaysia and hang out at the beach or go to Thailand and smoke a bunch of weed and listen to cute music at the beach. But I can tour. I always wanted to see the world," Boeckner said.

The pair has a plan. They will be moving from Montreal to Beijing next year "because the music scene on the side is more exciting right now than it is in America or Europe."

"It's really important for this band, that in 2011, when we put out our third record, that we're living in Beijing on this side of the world. Even though Beijing is a long way away from Manila, it would be easier for us to come to places like here, Vietnam, Thailand and Singapore," said Boeckner.

"I think it's the best place in the world to be," said Perry, who spent a few weeks in the city earlier this year to work on a guest music editor for Decoder magazine 'Pre Beijing.'

The relocation won't affect Handsome Furs's place in Wolf Parade. He says that the band usually takes a year off after cutting a record and touring it. Boeckner estimates that the band would not be reconvening in the studio until late 2011, with a rest to follow the year after.

In the meantime, the pair is writing their next record, which would be the follow-up to their sophomore effort Face Control. The band, which recorded most of their latest record in just six days, have simple aesthetic goal for their music. "We want to make it as loud as we possibly could," said Boeckner.

Nobody enjoys the process to go easily. "That's the main time we have arguments, when we're writing songs," said Boeckner. "We're both passionate people and we feel strongly about ours, many things."

"For creativity to be a good thing, you need to have rivals," added Perry.

Apparently, even the positive life has conflict.

Ultimate night out experience at the Lion City

PARTY CRAZY: Singapore's night life offers fun and playful parties for those on the lookout for delightful night time enjoyment.

Unleash your inner night owl in Singapore

NIGHTLIFE in sleek Singapore is expected to take on an extra vibrant quality as the city roars with excitement during the 2010 Grand Prix Season Singapore (GPSS) this September. As Asia's most-awaited racing event heats up, so will the many night spots that dot the Lion City's many lifestyle centres. From hot clubs and restaurants to laid-back lounges, diverse choices await night owls who find themselves in Singapore.

1.) Zouk

Zouk is arguably the most popular night club on Jiak Kim Road. With its wide dance floor and state-of-the-art sound and lighting system, the place has been witness to international celebrities partying like there's no tomorrow. Zouk is also one of the few parties in Asia that attracts the world's top DJs, making it the thing-go-to party to keep the entertainment filtering especially after enjoying an interesting parties romcos from Mariah Carey and Daughtery at the GPSS live concerts.

2.) Clarke Quay

Another night spot is Clarke Quay, a major landmark along the world-renowned Singapore River which is very popular for its modern, trendy and sophisticated ambiance. This is the "go to" place of bar hoppers because of its line of posh concept bars and clubs perfect for the night owls and party-goers. This place also gives travelers and adventurers a different kind of nightime high as it houses the 5-man Reverse Bungy, the gravity defying ride that drags riders hundreds of feet into the air in just three seconds. Offering exhilaratingly possible fun, a night at Clarke Quay can surely ramp up the adrenaline to roid up the action of the FORMULA ONE has and one of a kind entertainment courtesy of Singapore's "Ultimate Ladies' Night" at the Grand Park.

C-Mist Reverse Bungy at Clarke Quay

3. The Butter Factory

The Butter Factory at Tyrwhitt Road in the place to get one's unique groove on especially after getting all revved up at the aforementioned racing. FORMULA ONE fans famous for its bold and trendy party vibe, the place lets party-philes get their fill of cosmopolitan beats from hip-hop and R&B to urban grooves and street art. Adding to its fun-to-them are the in-house which have been ingeniously decorated by pop culture artists and designers.

4. Orgo

Orgo at the famous Raffles Avenue is the favoured haunt of travelers seeking the ultimate relaxing night out to complement the action-packed GPSS experience. Known for its uniquely crafted drinks and concoctions, the organic lifestyle-inspired establishment is located atop the Esplanade, Singapore's well-known water front venue, and provides guests with enticing views of the Marina Bay.

5. Stereolabs

Stereolabs in Raffles Boulevard is the place for travelers who wish to indulge in a night of upbeat sophistication. The place boasts of its stylish crowd, glamorous décor and exalted grooves. Posh attendees frequent this establishment for its trendy music and flashy vibes. Visitors looking to experience the best of Singapore can enjoy their GPSS experience with absolute fun and enjoyment at this exclusive club.

To book exclusive airfares and 2010 Formula One Singapore Grand Prix all-in-one packages, call Singapore Air at (632) 7526151 or 52 or 7080899 ext. 7202 or log on to www.singaporeair.com, or call Pilot Travel at (632) 756-8814 or visit www.pilottravel.net.

To directly purchase race tickets, visit www.singaporegp.sg, www.toteboard.com.ph, or call Ticketgenie at (632) 808-4041.

With so many celebrated exciting events during the 2010 Grand Prix Season Singapore, it's time to experience Your Singapore the way you want it! For more information, visit Yoursingapore.com.

First packaged tour to Spain's Santiago de Compostela now available in the Philippines

The Spain Tourism Board, Thai Airways, and 10 local travel agencies have partnered recently to form a consortium that will promote the Santiago de Compostela Pilgrimage tour in the Philippines.

"The Spain Tourism Board sees this as an opportunity for Filipinos to visit Santiago de Compostela in Spain, one of the three most sacred Roman Catholic sites in the world after Jerusalem and Rome. For many a century, millions of pilgrims have walked along the road to Santiago de Compostela. Traveling the breadth of Northern Spain, the road to Santiago stretches from the scenic Pyrenees Mountains in France all the way to Galicia, where Santiago de Compostela is located.

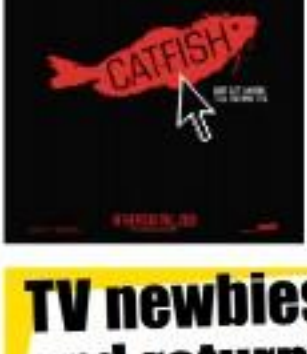
"This year also marks the Holy or Jubilee Year wherein the door of St. James Cathedral is opened - an occasion that happens only when the feast of St. James, July 25, falls on a Sunday - and will be waited up again a year later. The next Holy Year will be in 2021, 11 years from now.

Participants can choose between a walking tour and a bus tour. The Pilgrimage tour is scheduled by batch on the following departure dates: September 20, October 13, and October 27.

For booking and inquiries, you may contact Donnette Bson of Thai Airways at tel. +63 (02) 816-7817. For more details, visit us in Facebook: "Walk the Way of St. James: The Philippine Expedition."

WIN A TRIP TO SINGAPORE FOR TWO TO CATCH THE 2010 FORMULA ONE SINGTEL SINGAPORE GRAND PRIX!

Catfish: We're totally baited



By Tricia Puig
Contributor

WHEN a trailer for Catfish popped on my RSS feed, I had to click on it after reading Geekinguat.com's description...fony meets girl on Facebook, an online flirtation ensues and enough chemistry is present for the boy to drive cross-country just to meet her. Except things go really twisted in the end.

The trailer shows a film shot documentary-style, and it introduces you to Nev, a guy who could be our age, who's into photography, and into Megan Fox-ies. He met her on Facebook, and you see various clips of him looking through her photos, visibly excited over text messages exchanged while he's over here from the Midwest, every detail of their social media love affair.

With more courtships hatched on the internet, the desire to meet in person gets stronger over time and Nev decides to bring his friends and drive to Megan's family's farm in Michigan. That's where the story takes a dark turn and that's when the trailer fires its trophy-ends.

Don't be left wondering what will happen as the trailer says that the last 40 minutes of the film will "take you on an emotional roller-coaster ride that you won't be able to shake for days." Your imagination starts to run wild, as Megan is cancelled, a movie-watching psycho killer, a girl with a nipple for a nose or a human catfish, is into the title?

The film is shot along the thread of The Blair Witch Project & Paranormal Activity and while both films have admitted that they are fictional faux-cumentaries, Catfish claims that it is not based on a true story, nor was it inspired by one events—it's just true.

The trailer is viewing enough that while Googling the movie, I found myself navigating through the internet like it was a land mine...I want more information, but not enough that the whole experience will be spoiled before I get to watch the movie. I'm dying to find out, but I want to find out for myself just what the mystery is, it's that good.

The film debuted in the 2010 Sundance Film Festival and will run in US cinemas in mid-September. Critics are raving about the movie, and Film Journey rewarded only an "Oh my God" as a reaction after watching an advanced screening. We can only hope that our cinemas pick up this film so we can have our own creeped-out reactions.

Check out the trailer on http://www.nytimes.com/catfish and their Facebook page: http://www.facebook.com/catfishmovie.

TV newbies and returnees

What to watch out for in new US TV season

By Adrian H. Oy

TV SEASON premiere lineup seldom vacillates drastically from year to year. Networks usually stick to their tried-and-tested formulas, and the same goes for the shows they choose to air.

Every September, however, there are a few new shows that manage to break through the clutter and capture the attention of viewers. Some of these shows are good, some are bad, and some are just plain ugly. Here's a look at the ones that have caught my eye.

September 9 – Ashton Kutcher's Real Time Model returns to your screens, with finalists set to head over to Italy where the competition gets started down to the top 8. There's also the premiere of the new show Hellcats, a musical-dramedy co-created by Smallville star Tom Welling, starring Ashley Tisdale (High School Musical).

September 10 – Glee returns for its second season, with Finn (Cory Monteith) and Rachel (Lea Michele) finally getting together, Kurt (Chris Colfer) and Blaine (Darren Criss) finally coming out of the closet, and Sue (Jane Lynch) finally getting her own spin-off show. Also returning is Modern Family, which has been renewed for a third season.

September 14 – Tonight, twenty-two new shows premiere, including Fox's Lone Star, which tells the story of a young man who leaves his family's oil business to become a banker, and ABC's Better With You, which is about a couple who have their first baby and realize that they're not ready for it. Also premiering tonight is Outsourced, a workplace comedy about a call center in India.

September 15 – Tonight's premieres include Fox's The Chicago Code, which is about a female police superintendent who tries to clean up the city's corrupt police force, and NBC's Outlaw, which is about a lawyer who gives up his practice to become a Supreme Court justice.

September 16 – Tonight's premieres include ABC's Detroit 1-8-7, which is about a group of detectives who investigate violent crimes in Detroit, and CBS's Mike & Molly, which is about a couple who meet at Overeaters Anonymous.

September 17 – Tonight's premieres include NBC's Law & Order: Los Angeles, which is the latest spin-off of the long-running Law & Order franchise, and CBS's How to Be a Gentleman, which is about a man who tries to become a gentleman with the help of his sister.

September 20 – Tonight's premieres include ABC's Castle, which is about a mystery writer who helps the police solve crimes, and CBS's The Good Wife, which is about a woman who returns to her job as a lawyer after her husband is caught in a sex scandal.

September 21 – Tonight's premieres include NBC's Parenthood, which is about a family dealing with the challenges of raising children, and Fox's Raising Hope, which is about a young man who has to raise his baby daughter after his girlfriend is killed in a bank robbery.

September 22 – Tonight's premieres include ABC's Modern Family, which is about three different families who are related to each other, and NBC's Community, which is about a group of misfits who attend a community college.

September 23 – Tonight's premieres include CBS's The Big Bang Theory, which is about two physicists who live next door to a beautiful waitress, and Fox's Fringe, which is about a team of investigators who deal with cases involving fringe science.

September 24 – Tonight's premieres include ABC's The Middle, which is about a family living in the Midwest, and NBC's Parks and Recreation, which is about a group of employees working in the Parks and Recreation department of a small town.

September 27 – Tonight's premieres include CBS's The Mentalist, which is about a former psychic who helps the police solve crimes, and NCIS: Los Angeles, which is the latest spin-off of the long-running NCIS franchise.

September 28 – Tonight's premieres include ABC's Dancing with the Stars, which is a reality competition where celebrities are paired with professional dancers, and NBC's Law & Order: Special Victims Unit, which is the latest spin-off of the long-running Law & Order franchise.

September 29 – Tonight's premieres include CBS's The Good Wife, which is about a woman who returns to her job as a lawyer after her husband is caught in a sex scandal, and Fox's Fringe, which is about a team of investigators who deal with cases involving fringe science.

September 30 – Tonight's premieres include ABC's Modern Family, which is about three different families who are related to each other, and NBC's Community, which is about a group of misfits who attend a community college.

October 1 – Tonight's premieres include CBS's The Big Bang Theory, which is about two physicists who live next door to a beautiful waitress, and Fox's Fringe, which is about a team of investigators who deal with cases involving fringe science.

October 4 – Tonight's premieres include ABC's Modern Family, which is about three different families who are related to each other, and NBC's Community, which is about a group of misfits who attend a community college.

October 5 – Tonight's premieres include CBS's The Mentalist, which is about a former psychic who helps the police solve crimes, and NCIS: Los Angeles, which is the latest spin-off of the long-running NCIS franchise.

October 6 – Tonight's premieres include ABC's Dancing with the Stars, which is a reality competition where celebrities are paired with professional dancers, and NBC's Law & Order: Special Victims Unit, which is the latest spin-off of the long-running Law & Order franchise.

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September 30 – If you're looking for your vampire fix, The Vampire Diaries returns today, which ought to draw viewers from the fans of breakout stars Nina Dobrev and Ian Somerhalder. If you're preferring for a more familiar looking face though, the revamped Nikita title screens today, with Maggie Q (Mission: Impossible III) in the lead role. It's familiar territory for executive producer Nikita, who has also done Chuck and Human Target.

September 22 – Nikita is an actress/comedian, people, because Glee actually bought, as do the two BCS conferences, BCS and NCCU. Los Angeles. If you were a big fan of My Name Is Earl, then its creator, Greg Garcia, has a similarly dark comedy up for you. Raising Hope, about a 23-year-old who struggles to take care of his daughter, the result of a one-night stand with a woman who would later go to prison. That show runs back-to-back with another comedy, Running Wilde, which stars Will Arnett (Battle of Development) and Keri Russell (Felicity). Lastly, there's Detroit 1-8-7, which originally had a documentary vibe, but which was later taken out, reducing it to "just another cop show" status, though stars Michael Imperioli (Life on Mars, the 60 Minutes) and Natalie Martinez (South Bronx) will try their best to make it stand out.

September 23 – It's comedy night for the ABC network, bringing back The Middle, Cougar Town, and the funny-award-winning Modern Family, alongside newcomer Better With You, which is about half-hour comedy about a mixed-up family. Then afterward, it's The Whole Truth, a legal drama that shows the case from both the side of the accuser and the defense. More on tonight, at the same time, is Outsourced. The Undercovers, which is likened to an Mission: American Nerd in Heart about a spy couple, returning Law and Order: SVU, Criminal Minds, and The Defenders, a more lighthearted attempt at a legal drama, starring Jerry O'Connell (Crossing Jordan) and Jim Belushi (Saturday Night Live).

September 29 – Tonight will be the last night for the Fox Sci-fi (with the star-studded cast of Mountight's Alex O' Loughlin, Lost's Daniel Dae Kim, Battlestar Galactica's Grace Park, and former West Dick).

September 24 – Lots of returning shows tonight, with Bones, Community, The Big Bang Theory, 30 Rock, Fringe, Grey's Anatomy, The Office, CSI, Private Practice, and The Mentalist all vying for your attention. Also making their debuts are a pair of CBS comedies, $#*! My Dad Says, with William Shatner, and Outsourced, set in a call center in India. Finally there's My Generation, a mockumentary that follows a bunch of students after their 10th year high school reunion.

September 25 – It's literal season of Smallville which might mean we'll finally see the full-on costume before it ends. Also coming back are Medium, The Good Guys, Supernatural, CSI: NY on this night. Tonight also marks the return of Tom Selleck to TV on the show Blue Bloods, a show about a family of cops, that also stars Donnie Wahlberg and Bridget Moynahan.

September 27 – Nothing new premiering tonight, but movies of varying degrees of quality on the AXN animated comedy block, with The Simpsons, The Cleveland Show, and The Family Guy, making their season debuts, first of all. And there's a host of dramas too, like Desperate Housewives, Brothers and Brothers, and Private Practice. Not to forget your host, there's always The Amazing Race, the most beloved reality competition.

September 28 – Female-version of legal drama The Good Wife makes it return, but the marquee name is Michelle Yeoh—every Family, as Fantastic Four movies).

September 30 – Because no one wanted it, yet another Law & Order spin-off makes its debut, with Law & Order: Los Angeles, with Skeet Ulrich (Jericho), Alfred Molina (The Sorcerer's Apprentice), and Terrence Howard (Iron Man).

10 things we learned from 'Despicable Me'

Movies can make you want to buy things

By Pam Pastor

1. Gru goes a long way if you're long especially if your name is Elsie Fisher and you provided the voice of the adorable unicorn-loving Agnes.

2. Villains have hearts, too. At least this one does.

3. Movies can make you want to buy things. We've gone on a fundraiser campaign, searching for a copy of the puppet Three Sleepy Kittens, and yes, we want a unicorn one, too, or Buffy we've gotta do.

4. Movies can make you want to buy things you cannot buy not even if you had access to the Bank of Evil, like warm minions, low and lots of minions, real minions...and we don't mean the yellow ones from Amazon.com. Not the minions on the yellow carpet at the LA premiere, either.

5. Sometimes, cookies aren't just cookies. They can be cool tokens that want to send your dreams up.

6. Pie like Gru better than Steve Carell and we aren't bothered by this, not in the least bit.

7. Julie Andrews is just beautiful—even when she's playing a horrible mother.

8. Some movies characters are so adorable you'll be tempted to steal their cute-haired members outside the cinema. But you won't. Because you're afraid of the mall police. And deep down inside, you're actually insecure by proof, just like Gru.

9. Some people are meaner here (they're Lies) around, can still surprise you. Just like Pharrell Williams did with the incredible work he did on the movie's musical score and soundtrack. We have the Oscars lining on point now, and we've become instant Pharrell fans.

10. There's no point in wearing the shoes.

WHAT'S INSIDE
■ Danny Trejo—from ex-con to star /G4

Editor Nestor U. Torre ● Assistant Editor Rita P. Avila
SATURDAY Special

Admirers eagerly await La Aunor's return

By Ronald G. Mangubat

SINGER/COMEDIAN Andy Ilaiz vividly remembers the early '70s, when a petite, raven-haired singer from Iriga named Nora Aunor recorded a version of Marc Mysner's "And the Music Played." He was so floored by her exceptional golden voice that he bought his first 45 rpm record.

From there, Ilaiz started following her career until the "ordinary"-looking Bicolana stood out among her idol and rivals as matinee counterparts and rose to become the country's original Superstar.

When Aunor started doing movies, Ilaiz admits not being impressed by her acting skills—until he saw her early films under the tutelage of Lino Brocka. Also, he followed Brocka's "Maynila." At that point, he became a full-fledged "Noranian."

Today, Ilaiz is one of the many fans who wish to see their idol return to the silver screen after years in the United States.

Edgy roles

"She is sorely missed," he declares. "I think, if she gets the right material and works with a good director, she can still gain her potency. I want to see her portray edgy roles, like an intense teacher. She has so veer away from her underdog, spit-upfront image and surprise viewers with a riveting, powerful role's the likes the old roles associated with her."

Other people we talked to said that Aunor's reported comeback should be planned well by her handlers.

"She has to do that to make an impact on younger audiences who might not be aware of her major contributions to the entertainment world," explains Jocelyn Romero, a communication arts teacher. "We often see her dramatic acting style being spoof by

ADMIRERS /G

Sluggish pace hobbles 'Survivor' celeb showdown

By Nestor U. Torre

GMA-7's "SURVIVOR Philippines Celebrity Showdown" finally started rewarding last Aug. 30—to decidedly mixed reactions from viewers. Some acknowledged that the likes of Aubrey Miles, Princess Inah and Jon Hall were true-blue celebs—but, too many of the others? Well, not so much.

For one year, we generally liked the show's scenic and dramatic visuals, but wished that it didn't unfold as it was. Is Richard Gutierrez as program host? He did look sort of boring but showed him "in action" indicated that he wasn't all that buff.

We were quickly able to overlook that physical discrepancy, no sweat, but we had

SLOOOOW /G

GMA-7's reality show shapes up as a psychological and sociological square-off between the spotaneity-bares-and-bares-nots.

Havens for shopaholics and bookworms

THE GREENHILLS Shopping Center Thanggit is where you'll find back-to-school outfits that make you look smart and comfortable—a hodgepodge of affordable clothes, shoes, jeans, jackets, shirts, hats, backpacks and accessories. It's open daily from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Awareness

Now on its 12th year, the Manila International Book Fair (MIBF), a one-stop shop for booklovers, takes place on Sept. 15-19 at the SMX Convention Center.

The fair showcases contemporary and classic novels, textbooks, general references, e-books, audio accessories, multimedia, teaching supplies, and travel materials.

* * *

Register now for the upcoming Summer Photo Safari on Feb. 10-21, March 10-21 and 25-26, April 3-4 and 12-16, or May 6-9, 2011. E-mail: mandysantastero@yahoo.com, or call 890-3707.

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MMTA MOVIE GUIDE

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Robinsons Place Antipolo | Cinema 1 | Cinema 2 | Cinema 3 | Cinema 4 | Cinema 5 | Cinema 6 | Cinema 7 | Cinema 8 | Cinema 9 | Cinema 10

Robinsons Las Piñas | Cinema 1 | Cinema 2 | Cinema 3 | Cinema 4 | Cinema 5 | Cinema 6 | Cinema 7 | Cinema 8 | Cinema 9 | Cinema 10

Robinsons Place Dasmariñas | Cinema 1 | Cinema 2 | Cinema 3 | Cinema 4 | Cinema 5 | Cinema 6 | Cinema 7 | Cinema 8 | Cinema 9 | Cinema 10

Robinsons Place Iloilo | Cinema 1 | Cinema 2 | Cinema 3 | Cinema 4 | Cinema 5 | Cinema 6 | Cinema 7 | Cinema 8 | Cinema 9 | Cinema 10

Robinsons Place Bacolod | Cinema 1 | Cinema 2 | Cinema 3 | Cinema 4 | Cinema 5 | Cinema 6 | Cinema 7 | Cinema 8 | Cinema 9 | Cinema 10

Robinsons Place Cebu | Cinema 1 | Cinema 2 | Cinema 3 | Cinema 4 | Cinema 5 | Cinema 6 | Cinema 7 | Cinema 8 | Cinema 9 | Cinema 10

Robinsons Place Dumaguete | Cinema 1 | Cinema 2 | Cinema 3 | Cinema 4 | Cinema 5 | Cinema 6 | Cinema 7 | Cinema 8 | Cinema 9 | Cinema 10

Robinsons Place Cagayan de Oro | Cinema 1 | Cinema 2 | Cinema 3 | Cinema 4 | Cinema 5 | Cinema 6 | Cinema 7 | Cinema 8 | Cinema 9 | Cinema 10

Robinsons Place General Santos | Cinema 1 | Cinema 2 | Cinema 3 | Cinema 4 | Cinema 5 | Cinema 6 | Cinema 7 | Cinema 8 | Cinema 9 | Cinema 10

Robinsons Place Davao | Cinema 1 | Cinema 2 | Cinema 3 | Cinema 4 | Cinema 5 | Cinema 6 | Cinema 7 | Cinema 8 | Cinema 9 | Cinema 10

Admirers eagerly await . . .

(From page C1)

round up conditions...but they're all engaging projects. I seldom watch local movies, but I make it a point to view Nora Aunor films. I always get moved by her performance!"

For new movie and television artists Gina Marissa Tagasa, real acting talent is something many...and she believes the Superstar knows.

Triumphs and debacles

"Her roller-coaster ride through her triumphs and debacles may have only polished her acting skills all the more," she notes. "If she decides to make a comeback, she could portray a role similar to what Shirley Lin enjoyed in 'Tanging,' or what Lolita Rodriguez portrayed in 'Ina Kong Sisa' Or, perhaps she can be a (wife's) mother or an OFW hostage-taker!"

Scriptwriter Agnes de Guzman couldn't agree more. "The possibilities are endless for the Superstar," she declares. "Her talent is boundless!" De Guzman, who agrees that the unstereotyped actress' strength lies in her expressive eyes, says Lit Sister can pull off a role similar to Meryl Streep's character in Clint Eastwood's "The Bridges of Madison County"—"Or she can be a scheming mistress in an all-out evil local movie!"

Jessel Concepcion's 20 shelfers has a different opinion: "There already has a larger-than-life persona," he tells us. "Also, her absence from the industry has widened the gap between her and the local audience. It would be difficult to accept her in a 'heartwrenching sad' role. I think what would best suit her are characters in historical dramas."

Rainier Arevalo, a former OPM, thinks that with all the trials that Aunor has undergone, a successful comeback is well-deserved. "Ipakitang siya na 'di pa rin 'tao-hood.' She should collaborate with the best people. Her loyal fans have long waited for her return to acting, so I hope she doesn't disappoint us. It's about time that the shows Tomdoon's (younger actors who) owe acting to all about!"

Sluggish . . .

(From page C1)

a harder time dealing with some of the contestants' similar lack of physical dynamism.

Some of them appeared to have been chosen for their vocal talent "inspite of" a casual "sophistication," so we wondered how they would fare when finally confronted with the competition's "carnival" challenges and the location's lack of amenities, conveniences—and food that they would have to scrounge around for themselves.

Sadly, many of the "sophisticates" from the class would (to be blunt) stand by non-stand it: egos, perhaps the "high flying" they were there precisely to be subtly ripped off their pedestals and seen splashing into the lipsmacking mud, to "ordinary" viewers' sadistic delight.

So each assistant in the "sophisticates" was the presence of a number of mere egos, but sadly, they were thoroughly upstaged by the more telegenic survivors, but they can be expected in some title their own as power players after the reality of the group's arduous, month-long challenge finally strikes in.

The "sophisticates" versus "survivor Philippines" shape up as a psychological and sociological square-off between the symbolic haves and have-nots of society. Given any TV show's intent to appeal to as many viewers as possible, it could be safe to say that, at the end of the rigorous competition, it'll be the have-nots who will be having the last laugh.

That's populist and democratic and all that, but we wish that the reality challenges can pull it off more forcibly and startlingly. At the end of the first telecast, all the group had done was look for food and find the camp. There's five, you-up-a-really-tall-tree-and-tell-us for the night—and get on each other's nerves.

Off-putting

And, oh yes, in the initial telecast's most off-putting gambit, some of the survivors were chosen respectively according results a missing vitamin. Somebody should have told them to wear adult Pampers, instead.

The succeeding telecasts sustained the competition's wishfully-high group progression, and it wasn't until the third telecast that the first big challenge was held. It required the survivors to climb up a wall, fall into a net, roll off, run, look for keeps in the mud, dash over a bed of hot coals, hurl the keeps into a pit—etc.

As expected, at the end of the long and sometimes messy challenge, it was the "sophisticates" who—and this, alas, was leaving the rather modest types eating dust'—at mud. Princess couldn't even complete the challenge and looked quite miserably out of sorts—see non-stars coming up!

If to enough, the event really spiced up the dish, which eventually made it quite appetizing, more said to Sept. 7 telecast, which finally came up with a dynamic challenge...a race involving some interestingly yucky animal parts.

But was really more like it, and we hope that the done comes up with more all the wall crapers like that to keep viewers tuning.

From ex-con . . .

From page C6

welterweight titles in San Quentin," I said, "You're Eddie Bunker."

"I knew the gag—he wrote the screenplay, Eddie asked me. 'So you still go boxing?' I swore, Yeah.' He said, 'Do you want a job?' I said, 'I can't say no.' That's going to give me 50 bucks for acting like a convict." He said, 'No. We need a hitter to teach one of the actors how to box.' I said, 'How much does it pay?' He said, '$220 a day.' I said, 'Does Sadly do just wear this gig bear up?' He went, 'No, no. The actor might need you.' I said, 'For $100 bucks, give him a couch. Are you crazy? I've been beaten up for free.'

"So, I started assisting Eric Roberts how to box for 'Runaway Train.' They saw that I was easy to work with. Then, the director (Andrei Konchalovsky) hired me to act in it. From there, I got more.

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From ex-con to star

LOS ANGELES—For many Hollywood actors go around proclaiming, "I've been in every prison in the state of California." In fact, only Danny Trejo, star of Robert Rodriguez's "Machete," likes to say that in interviews.

A former drug addict and criminal, Danny did spend 11 years in jail—but now, he's an actor who speaks to you like to help them avoid the mistakes he made.

With his badass mustache and scraggy face, Danny reminds us of the towering Latin-ethnic actors in Filipino movies in the '60s and '70s.

That's why he was perfect as the lead in a parody trailer that Robert made for his and Quentin Tarantino's homage to that era's Hollywood: it movies, "Grindhouse." Response to the fake preview—a winking tribute to the movies that were so over-the-top that no one loved them—and to Danny was overpowering phenomenal.

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Ruben V. Nepales

Trejo's "Every day is a starting day of the rest of my life."

Fan-driven

"Once we did the trailer, the rest was fan-driven," shared Danny in a recent interview. "We got calls from all over the world, telling us, 'Please, make this movie! It will be great!'"

He recalled, "When I was autograph-signing in London, guys came up to me and said, 'Hey, check out my nerves.' They would raise the hair on their arms...and there was the image of Machete that big on their back. I called Robert. I emailed him a photo of that guy's back."

One of the enthusiasts for the parody trailer, Robert gave to and made a full-length movie. And, finally, Danny, the prop-tailed re-convict who has over a hundred movie credits, has a role title in "Machete," which premiered at this year's Venice Film Festival.

The resulting movie shows a, well, machete-wielding action, but no less than Robert De Niro as a Texas politician, Steven Seagal, Michelle Rodriguez, Don Johnson (humorously retrofitted as an "honey-dusting" role) and Lindsay Lohan. And, Jessica Alba. Danny smiled as he said, "Jessica plays a gorgeous immigration officer. We had a joke going: 'If I were illegal, I'm turning myself in. I'd say to her, 'Hello, I'm illegal!'" Illegal immigration is a sub-theme of this gory send-up of exploitation movies.

The 66-year-old, whose buff physique has been described as a pitbull's body, said in between chuckles, "I'm always asked this question. What was the best thing you enjoyed in making this movie? I always say, 'Kissing Jessica Alba.' After I kissed her, my three best male friends were trying to kiss me! They were, 'You kissed Jessica Alba!' I said, 'Get away from me! Action is a pro. She can make anything look real. Acting is making people believe that you're not acting. She was acting, I wasn't. I was in love with her. She was a blessing. I kept running up the kissing part. I said, 'Robert, could we do another one? But, she was awesome about it."

Stars' prisons

"I was famous in institutions," Danny said, recalling his days in California's San Quentin and Soledad state prisons. "I did a lot of fighting." He won the lightweight and welterweight boxing titles while he was in the former. With a grin, he dished, "Man, I like fighting in the movies better. Because you don't have a headache afterward. You're not cut."

Danny's anecdote about how he became an actor is a long but amusing tale in which he takes a dig at Hollywood's make-believe world: "I was a drug counselor," he began. "And, I was working with a kid. He was 18 years old; a rich kid. He got off cocaine after two weeks. The kid had an allowance of about a couple of grand monthly. I used to help him stay clean. One night, he called me up. He was in prison. He said, 'I think I'm going to use drugs, Danny, because there's a lot of them in my job. Will you come and hang out with me?' I said, 'Sure.' That's what I do.

Tattoos

"So, I went. It was in the women-house district of Los Angeles. I thought he worked in a warehouse, but it was the set of a movie called 'Runaway Train,' with John Voight and Eric Roberts. It was the cocaine dung. I've seen so much stuff. All those guys were trying to act like convicts. They were trying to be so tough—it was funny! They all had fake tattoos. I'd smear them tattoos. I kept saying, 'Oh shoot, I'm sorry.'

"This guy asked me, 'Do you want to be an extra?' I replied, 'Extra what?' He said, 'Can you act like a convict?' I said, 'I'll give it a shot.' I took off my shirt. I have a big tattoo on my chest. A guy came up and said, 'Hey you're Danny Trejo. I saw you with the lightweight and

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SNEAK PREVIEWS

Larger than life

PACINO: Superstar fits man from his convictions acts

DAMES: Performance of a lifetime

By Nito P. Avile

THE TRIUMPH of Al Pacino ("You Don't Know Jack") and Claire Danes ("Temple Grandin") in their respective categories—Outstanding Actor and Actress in a Miniseries or Movie...at...last year's Primetime Emmy Awards were no easy feats.

After all, the 70-year-old actor had formidable competitors: Jeff Bridges ("U. Big Dude"), Ian McKellen ("The Prisoner"), and "The Special Relationship's" Michael Sheen and Dennis Quaid, portraying Tony Blair and Bill Clinton, respectively. The 31-year-old actress likewise had a tough acting field to handle: Judy Davis ("Nanny in Chief"), Maggie Smith ("Capturing Mary"), Joan Allen ("Georgia O'Keeffe") and Hope Davis ("The Special Relationship") playing Hillary Clinton.

Pitching HBO's "You Don't Know Jack" and "Temple Grandin" is an oversimplification: for TV buffs and actors alike. The characters Pacino and Danes portray are tough nuts to crack, but they manage to keep up with the larger-than-life complexity of their roles and the thematic subtleties of the biopics they uphill.

Euthanasia advocate

Barry Levinson's disturbingly provocative "You Don't Know Jack" is a bold, albeit divisive attempt to understand euthanasia advocate, Dr. Jack Kevorkian—aka Dr. Death...the lessons, pushcart, and other straight-laced doctor-assisted suicide in its first.

Believing that "dying is not a crime," Kevorkian advocates for a quick and painless treatment into the afterlife. He assisted in the deaths of more than 130 terminally ill people between 1990 and 1998.

In each of them, the individuals themselves took the final action that resulted in their deaths. Kevorkian "assisted" his patients by attaching them to a euthanasia device he had made. In 1999, he began serving eight years of a 10-to-25-year prison sentence for second-degree murder and was paroled in 2007, on condition that he would no longer offer suicide advice.

It's been a while since we last saw Pacino in a challenging role deserving of his histrionic chewmarie gifts—and we're glad to see him at the top of his form game again. Watching how he handles heartbreaking moments of "tortured" compassion and seeing his patients beg for strokes to end years of constant pain and suffering make you ascribe validity to his arguments, but it also makes you question if the nature of his "humane act" is morally justified.

Regardless of whether you agree with the controversial physician or not, Pacino deftly puts a human face to Kevorkian's controversial advocacy and skillfully negotiates the most brain fun contentious acts of "mercy killing."

Inspiring tale

"It Shrouded Mind" movie "Temple Grandin" in Mick Jackson's "Temple Grandin," in which Claire Danes delivers the performance of a lifetime. It tells the inspiring tale of an autistic woman who rises above unspeakable odds to overcome the limitations imposed on her by her condition. She eventually becomes a doctor in animal sciences, a professor at the Colorado State University, a best-selling author, and a livestock-industry consultant.

It's a joy to see Danes endorse the complexity of her role as the "squirrel" into her character—a performance that is truly deserving of an Emmy statuette. But, Julia Ormond (as her doting mom, Eustacia), David Strathairn (as Professor Carlock, Temple's boarding-school mentor), and Catherine O'Hara (as her loving Aunt Anne) turn in similarly-deserving portrayals.

The Emmy-winning Ormond is particularly unforgettable in a good number of scenes. It's heartbreaking to see her reaction as Temple delivers her valedictory address—and even steps (1) "Tina'll Never Walk Alone"—at her college graduation day.

Also memorable is the scene in which Temple tells parents of autistic kids how her mother's shifting love and patience have helped her beat the odds. And it's even more moving when Temple ("who panics when people touch her") allows her mother to hug her—for the first time!

Not much to 'Idol'-ize

By Nestor U. Torre

WHEN THE new "musical television" "Idol," debuted on the small screen last week, we made it a point to catch the premiere telecast, to see what scraps remain the new show had to offer.

...Big production numbers, definitely. With Sarah Geronimo as its principal female lead, the opening telecast featured lavish, colorful stage and dance that gave the show an extra special lift.

After that big, bright start, however, the new musical-drama series settled into an all too familiar storytelling groove that had longtime friends Sarah and Gary Valenciano in a singing search, which Sarah eventually won.

Financial stress

They're paired off as a stellar singing team, but their promising careers are abruptly obstructed when Sarah's parents are caught in a financial mess set of their own devising. In subsequent episodes, the family hides in the province, where Sarah assumes a new identity and has to say goodbye to her stellar dreams.

For his part, Sam tries to go solo, but without much success. He's distracted by his dirty mother (Zsa Zsa Padilla) and his frolic efforts to find his best friend, whom he misses terribly.

The program's third episode focused on a new principal character, a sassy jock-all rocker played by Coco Martin, who turns out to have a heart of gold, because he's indulging up a brood of kids all by his lonesome.

It's also clear that, despite their initial isn't just minimalism, he likes Sarah, and a flare-Coco stanley for her affection seems a mix of the script train plot and conflict hooks.

So, after the first three episodes, how does the show measure up? It gets plus points for some of its bright and tuneful musical numbers, but its plotting is slow and predictable, and its performances are generally high-strung but neither melodramatic nor dynamic.

In small, Sarah's portrayal is generally well-meaning but lacking in believability and genuine emotional investment. She keeps shifting awkwardly from "earnest" to "kooky" like it's simply a matter of punching buttons.

Sam's problem is still his sticky way of speaking Tagalog. On top of that, the character he "creates" is over-acted and dull, and turns the acting gamut only from "O" to "U." He either doesn't know that there's much more to the thespic alphabet than that, or doesn't care to investigate those other possibilities.

In the Cases, he was last slipped into a Dennis Roi, despite his harmonies "hello" credentials. His "sassy" character have a too-knee-jerk hectic to be either convincing or appealing. And, what's he doing in a musical-drama show when he can't really sing? His number with his singing siblings ended with him doing lyrics wrong!

Then Jim, the best work in the series in terms of performance is contributed by Zsa Zsa, who can act and sing with real relish and powerful pipes. But, even Zsa Zsa's best efforts are diminished in terms of impact by the generally unnecessary way her musical number is staged around her.

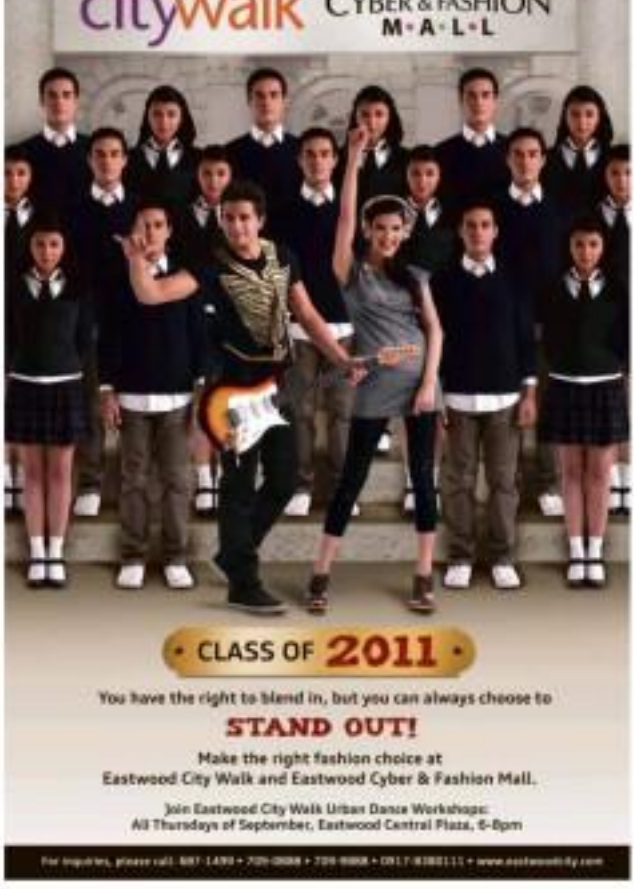
New identities

On point of believability, the series encounters heaps of problems when Sarah and her relatives maneuver new identities in order to be able to "disappear" in the province. How do they assume an "outside"? By putting on colorful wigs!

Come on, that's only going to be call more attention to them in the boondocks—so, the show's lack of interest in being logical and credible presents itself as an unnecessary distraction that prevents viewers from being genuinely drawn into storytelling.

The result that the production will find at least some of those points worth considering and rationalizing, so that there will be room to "Idol" to idolize in the weeks and months to come.

GERONIMO (CENTER, WITH RILEY AND MARTIN). A rivalry for her affection seems as one of the series' main plot and conflict hooks.



More empathetic sense of romance needed in 'Say I Do'

By Nestor U. Torre

LAST MONTH, GMA-7's "Loveling" limited weekly sitcom clutched onhanding "Say I Do," an abridged romcom production hopefully filled Ruffa Gutierrez-Yamamoto and Jeric Raval. Poe, with Joey Marquez and Cassy Manila cast as Fernandez's estranged parents.

They are abruptly reunited when Mark Anthony asks for his girlfriend Lovi's hand in marriage, and the family has to make "pretend" to be happy all over again, and Lovi and Jess possess an overdose enough to believe their "performance."

We caught the show's first telecast and was mildly bothered by the editorial lack of "breathing" between its two romantic leads. Separately, they're proficient players in their own right, but they look too "cool" to each other at loads of a romcom.

Getting romantic leads requires more than just getting them into "together" and hoping that they'll like each other enough to make their romantic scenes believable and empathetic.

For one thing, Mark Anthony is considerably older than Lovi, although he works hard not to show it.

Difference

More than their age difference, however, Ruffa seems together, at least in the first telecast of "Say I Do," didn't give them enough opportunities to romantically relate to one another.

Perhaps this was due to the show's intention to pick up the comedy, or maximize first to purchase beats on the cat-and-dog skirmishes involving the "estranged" characters played by Joey and Cassy.

They were at their in the telecast that Lovi and Mark Anthony were sometimes reduced to supporting players—a no-no in a romcom, where the "stars" must be exquisitely balanced with the "cute" element, so that one enhances rather than upstages the other.

In addition, the Joey-Cassy skirmishes were staged in too convoluted and predictable a manner, so the laughs they generated felt forced. Both veterans were good comedy players, but the way they were handled behind-the-scenes and inventive.

Distractions

Yet more than those initial blunders and distractions, Say I Do can be remedied so, so that the romcom show can enjoy smoother and more delightful sailing.

The new teenage of Lovi and Mark Anthony should be given a chance to warm up to each other and the boy-girl romantic tandem should also be provided with more opportunities to come into its own—without this oldie actors intervening upstaging the younger players.

It would also help if the show's production values could be enhanced. Pre-telecast, last Aug. 28, the official romcom's wedding scene was staged in too stark and dry a fashion. More genuine fun and experience scenes of romance, please.

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Tragedy tweaked to wacky effect

By Rina F Asis

IF YOU'RE among those who were exasperated by local authorities' haughty[sic] openness to put a powerful and bloodless end to the recent Hotel Oak hostage-taking incident, you'd miss the delightfully ridiculous. But only off a series of hoax-encounters in Gil Evans' "Ten Funerals" you'll be thrilled. Indeed, Indie's a stranger than fiction.

In "Ten Funerals" (Screenscope) there is a month before the above-mentioned massacre), tragedy is wackily tweaked when Otso (Dante Tonson) opens the locked of her 12-year-old daughter, Cherry Boomerang (Princess Montero), who was among the people who perished in a stampede accident in Quiapo Plaza during Holy Week—in the campaign season fueled by "It Isn't Enough" (Pilo Hilario) the remains of 46-year-old Infanta, Salvador Bautista (Bobong Osorio), undead!

In a result of the hoopy following the accident, the funeral parlor that prepared the victims' remains had an inkwell-fully switched Bautista's body with Cherie's! So, the Bautista could go to Tagaytayan, Cagayan, way up north, while the father a late-

LIH AND TONES. Tupsil topical victim.

era in Malabog, Batangas, in the south—where the thug's estranged brother, Mudang (Bembol Roco), resides.

Opportunity

Malabog sees his brother's existentially "hi-sons-coming" as a money-making opportunity. After all, Mudang's head has a bounty from a harangue cigarette who wants to avenge the rape of his 61-year-old uncle-mother!

Meanwhile, to recover her daughter's remains, Otso goes on a thousand-kilometer road trip with Gerry (Dino Imvu), Cherry's fiancé, and business partner, Tonyo (Jao Mico) and Rosario (Arthur Guiluad), a married albeit closet-gal pal. Along the way, they encounter colorful characters—among them vampy cops, grandstanding politicians and a priest who's non-Interpol-like vocation and the ways of the flesh!

Tristan Gatchi's competent screenplay with a finely tuned pos-Lloyd Siol (Jao Mico) exhibits the logical and comic puerile transitions. She is particularly inviting in the scene where she finally sees her daughter's body. Jane regains well-reserved, but his relative parsimonious in acting is evident in his frenzied movements.

Quirino generously comes lively laughs as his character struggles to contain his primal anger until Tonyo's comment tossing, as well as his affinities to Gaspar's witches. Gerry, Felipe and his wife Gradado, who plays his estranged-acting client, are appropriately opportunistic.

Social waves

After the excitable "Mourning Linda" said 2009's people-mighty hit "Pink Bulog," Dante is back in fighting form in this dark satire that crosses over ineffectively with the country's social waves and beginning fits. The distrustful that Pi-lar and company must see us di-vorces (her ass least) that there never-ending or grating to thrill.

Notes: movie like story along smoothly through its twists and turns, and despite some damned coincidences (there's no over-abundance of sweetness, loveable characters) and a number of one-the-top moments, the movie effortlessly captures the sort of moral murky with out going didactic on us.

SHOW BIZ Q&A

Those talented Eigenmanns

By Jocelyn Valle

LUCERO. Adopted Filipino actress offers Isabel's character in "Bench 94."

OUR Q&A this week:

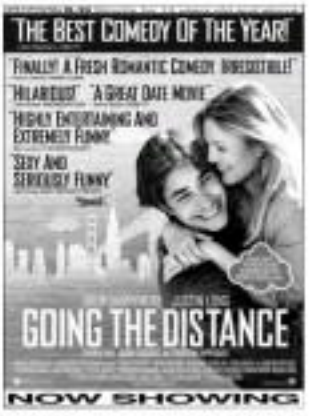
Why are there so many Filipino actors filmed or partly shot in Malaysia, aside from Gina Lloyd Cruz and Ben Alonzo's Who Am I Like Guilty?[sic]—writer de Jesus, Malaysia.

The 2004 romantic drama "50 My Life," and scenes shot in Langkawi, which is loaded to have the best location in Malaysia. It's one of the stops of the Southeast Asian route taken by the characters of Jiga Melchek and Kristin Hotmovie.

On the other hand, director Cesar Montano shot his movie "Ekstra" in Bulacan because he went there for the Aurora Film Festival. He became a Muslim upon his return six years later.

On TV, "Kahit Isang Saglit," starring Jolo Revilla and Dawn Zulueta, actress Carmen Soriano shot in Malaysia in 2009, as well as the upcoming "Your Song Presents: Beautiful Girl," with Sid and Christian Bautista.

E-mail: jsvalle2000@gmail.com



FAMILY TIES

Will the third time be the charm for my favorite 'kontrabida'?

By Celine Raine

I HAD no idea of how good an actress Lui Lisa Ukoha was when I was 10. I'd come home from school just in time to catch her popular noontime drama series, "Sinadulsa," where she played the heroine's mom-faced grandmouth, Dolfa Martina. Seeing her always play a villain, I was completely convinced my mother, "Bubit sa Pi," measuring up Lola, grew up to be a bossy, fussy nanay, makati ang!" I was disturbed to hear that she was finally back to roll all the time. But, they always assured me, Lola Gloria is always right.

Lola Gloria is known to the public as Mona Lisa. Despite her "popularity" as an anthocrine, she was kind soon in a movie quoting a movie "Mother Ignacia: ang Ebanal" in 1998. I remember going to the premiere night with my mom, and my aunt. At one point in the movie, she had a scene in her room at night, so overblown with someone. There were light shots of her face, and on her head was a colorful hair. I felt that she went too peeping. It was a quiet scene, and the entire theater was graciously attentive, but despite all efforts to remain calm, my mom, aunt and I fell to a tearful fit of laughter at the sight of Lola wearing such a cheesy accessory on her head.

We knew her for her comedy, so the image of her dressing up for deep-rounded as up?

Before the style, white-haired villainess that has become her trademark since her return to television (that line became her trademark since her return to television) in 2002, the first part of her career was as early as primary until the mid-'50s. And, even then, she was given roles that complimented the natural beauty she had acquired from a fruit-picking life of labor in Cabarroguis during the Great Depression.

Speaking parts

At age 23, she signed with Philippines Studios as Flore de Lis and had to work doubly hard to get speaking parts and memorable lines in movies. Because of her inability to speak and understand Tagalog. But, with her God-given gift, she quickly caught up. She was given the roles of the conniving friend, Misunderstood Filipina, and would have her hand on reclaiming scenes during an era of conservative style outfits.

Earlier this year, I attended the Grand Homecoming Mass Gala-thong Bayan ng Kalikasan ng Pilipinas in lieu of my Lola and, before handing out her award, Boots Anson-Roa's memories of her as the original SubiDuyan named actress of local show biz. She was, indeed.

In 1959, she shared the screen with 60s-ful Sol, Ely Ramos, and Fernando Poe Jr. in DZN Studios' "Silbi Ko." She played a shy girl and was surrounded probably by Ely Ramos, turning off with him in close somewhere while still in her bathing suit. The musical love story is now one of the very few surviving pre-war movies in the country, thanks to the Lucinda Imbong, which funded its restoration as a centennial gift to the Philippines.

MONA LISA (ABOVE, RIGHT, WITH THE AUTHOR): Blocks had ordered her to cry in the final scene of "Sinadulsa" (right) — with only one tear falling from star lash eye!

In 1960, she signed up with 20th Film and changed her name to Mona Lisa. One of their post-war films, "Sugat" (1946), has also been preserved. With an imperial Islamic setting and dialogue delivered in pure English, it was bought by an American distributor and is still being sold today.

Scenes of American belly-dancing women were edited in, and the title was changed to "Forbidden Women." Starring the young Rowing Ladera, this movie was directed by 20th Film's very own actor director, Eduardo de Castro.

When my Lola got married and was diagnosed with grand mal epilepsy she decided to early retirement. Her last movies were "Bahay Ahoranag" with Anita Linda, under the direction of Eddie Romero, and "Ulan sa Bintana" with child star, Tessie Agana, Sylvia La Torre, and introducing Rumor Bonifacio. She became a full-time housewife to Cesito.

Some 20 years later, she was introduced to director Lino Brocka, and she agreed to a comeback. But, according to her, being the "professional" she had become at the time, she received a call from another production and, thinking it was Brocka, she came upside down.

The latter production happened to be Jerry Gracionglish's "La Bikina," a glamorous black-and-white film that became her comeback movie, showcasing her dramatically all-star hair for the first time.

Abusive mother

When she finally met Brocka, "Inang" was not to be found. She was in play the abusive mother of Hilda Koronel in the drama, and he wanted her to look younger and reduce Rumor Bonifacio. When she read the script, she told her husband, "I'm going to win an award for this."

She knew what she was talking about—she won the 1975 Famas Best Supporting Actress award, among others. "Inang" was the first Filipino movie to be shown at the Cannes Film Festival and continues to receive rave reviews abroad.

There was a dear film made on Brocka where a portion had people discussing the things they had heard about the director. A woman talked about "Inang" on how the director once ordered an actor to cry on cue from a specific eye. She spoke of it as if it were a myth. But, I've always known the story to be true—because that was my Lola! Brocka had ordered her to cry in the final scene of "Inang," with only one tear falling from the left eye, when having finally left her.

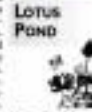
With the popularity of indie-value and filmmakers rising, before the Cinemalaya Festival comes, "forgotten" actors are remembered. In the last few years, there has been a demand for Lola to make another comeback. Directors and producers have been persuading her to take a role for the love of a good script. Now that she has retired from the business she was offended by Lola's unwavering refusal and asked her, "Bigyan ka ng pera nun?" She said she would appear for free—if only she could.

Mona Lisa's last publicity appearance was for the unveiling of her star at the Walk of Fame in Eastwood five years ago. And, even though she maintains that there remains only one role she'd still be interested in playing—that of her mother—I think she only wants to enjoy her Lisa Brocka of this millennium to convince her to act in front of the cameras again.

Making choices

THE MATERIAL world is described as a world of darkness—not because of the absence of electrical light but due to the lack of wisdom. Strange coming words, examples are realistic examples of how dark men perish:

People become overwhelmed with desires, anger by anger and confusion. The hoarings taker is covered by the vision that his happiness is dependent on material security. He does every thing he can to achieve it—even at the cost of lives.



R. Valenciar and S. Blossard

Attachment

In the Vedas, it is stated, "One who contemplates the objects of the senses develops an attachment to them. From attachment, lust develops, and from lust, anger arises; from anger, delusion; and his memory is bewildered. He then falls into the lowest condition of material existence."

The solution to this darkness isn't achieved by fighting it. Just as it's impossible to fight darkness by punching it, a man can never deliver ignorance by resorting to violence. Bring the light into our lives with spiritual wisdom. When knowledge enlightens us, we will understand the origin and solution to our problems.

There once was a son of a rich Chinese couple who always got what he wanted from his parents. When he wouldn't, he'd suffer a seizure and be hospitalized for a week. Then, his parents would give in.

When his mother refused her refusal to her teacher, she was advised to cancel her granted and not give in to her son's tedious. When she got home, the new computer and his mother said no, he began convulsing. Despite her apprehension, she walked away. When the boy saw that his mom had left, his "pseudo-seizure" stopped.

Due to "taken feelings" by people who are controlled by material desires. Blindly, we follow their orders. But, enlightenment liberates us from such clutches.

We can be freed from our most material obsessions and desires. To live in a world of light or darkness is a choice we need to make.

Readers react

By Nestor U. Torre

OUR RECENT article, "Interest Before Education," has gotten a lot of positive feedback, indicating that readers agree that mathematics must be addressed before kids can be educated, because it magically limits what they can learn.

In this regard, we're happy to share that the Department of Education is planning to revise its "Road for School" program, in cooperation with the Department of Social Welfare and Development and the Department of Agriculture. The program should be revised, because it requires school attendance, performance in class, and pupils' ability to retain information.

Reverend corrector

Reacting to our recent piece on going without TV for one whole week abroad, our revered mentor from way back, Fernando "Baby" Barrameda, must be fully established with our notes on the TV people we didn't miss, and in fact were glad not to get (taken) off by during our self-imposed "vacation" from television.

Paging Dr. Bernal

Some TV people, wanting to use more of Antidote people more often, TV have asked us for more information on the "Dr. Bernal" we cited as a great speaker whom we should all emulate.

Do they want to hire him as a coach or give him his own show? They really should, because he could teach all of us valuable lessons on how to speak correctly, clearly and interestingly—on TV and off.

However, we failed to catch the good doctor's first name when he guested on a local medical show once it "Talk to Him"?!—so, we're asking our TV colleagues to provide more information about the optimum-voiced public speaker and TV program guest, who spoke so much better than most of us do that he could be cited as the perfect role model for people who "have" to appear on television.

Only the best and brightest need apply

Some students want us to give them tips on how they can be successful and rewarding careers on TV news and public-affairs programs.

Our first tip: You should be among the best and the brightest in your school, because learning to the audience sometimes unfortunately rewards on-the-TV viewing news and public affairs is challenging, complex and demanding, and only the best people should be in it.

Yes, you should also look and sound good, but that's a relatively minor qualification. Above all, you should realize that it's a huge privilege and responsibility to serve the informational needs of thousands and sometimes even millions of viewers. That's why you should be good and smart enough to play your best games each and every day you appear on television.

Not point out that many of the people currently on TV, including many veteran "newsbuoys," fall to pass muster in this regard? All the more reason, then, for those to belatedly see the light of day—or falling that. Overcome you can't teach some dogging dogs new tricks, that's why we need new, intimidating and outspoken broadcast-news people to step into the breach and fill in those Hardcory blanks!

Wonders of the universe revealed

ON THE DISCOVERY Channel, two landmark programs, "Into the Universe with Stephen Hawking" (Sept. 19 at 9 p.m.) and "Stephen Hawking's Universe" (Sept. 20 at 9 p.m.), explore the origins, splendor and wonders of the universe, as only the world's most illustrious living scientist can. Despite suffering from a debilitating motor neuron disease, Dr. Hawking is a crucial force in the development of general relativity and cosmology.

Internet star 'invades' show business

Belarmon, the comedy artist who has captured YouTube viewers, brilliantly spoofs the meeting of pop and mainstream culture with hilarious results. He plays three characters in his sketches—Bhabat (Bhabat) Belarmon, Celebrity and Baby Belarmon, all Daniel speakers of the "Belarmon" language. Once, he even made a "Balarilla" Belarmon address at the presidents of the Belarmon Republic!

Belarmon has become so popular that he's caught the attention of some TV shows, and has been signed up by Chris Cahilig of Crossbreed, which has big plans for him as he prepares to "officially" launch his show his career. For booking inquiries, call 666-7211 or 0908 879 7055.

Super Bowl of China

To mark its 10th anniversary Super Bowl of China offers its loyal patrons a sumptuous treat this month—"10th Year Anniversary Bullock: 999 Gimpy Noodles with Assorted Seafood." Other yummy mouthwatering items: Lemon Chicken, Yang Chow Fried Rice, Steamed Fish Fillet with Garlic, Sliced Beef with Broccoli, Braised Tofu with Mushrooms, and Sweet and Sour Fish Fillet.

Orders are at Megamall, Glorietta 4, Festival Mall, Gateway Mall of Balanced Trinoma.

'Beyond Folklore, 2'

Repetition's forthcoming season production at the CCP is entitled "Beyond Folklore, 2." The shows will serve as a preview of Repetition's North American performances under the auspices of Columbia Artists New York.

'Bristol Bay Brawl'

In Discovery Channel's two-part special, "Bristol Bay Brawl," Alaska's toughest fishermen race to snag herby boatloads in the 2000 herring season in England, Alaska.

MONTAGE The opening special premiere on Sept. 20 at 10 p.m. and Sept. 27 at 10 p.m.

Christine Bautista

Christine Bautista's "Romance Revisited: The Love Songs of Jose Mari Chan," has been extended. Double-platinum in Indonesia, equivalent to more than 150,000 albums sold in that territory, live on Christine's popularity there, he will also be shooting an Indonesian movie next month.

'100 Bachelors'

The launch of the first online community for singles called "100 Bachelors" dovetails with a

HAWKING. Crucial force in the development of general relativity and cosmology

BIKIMON. Plays three characters in his comedy sketches

memorable party for singles, "100 Bachelors: The Perfect Ladies' Night Out," at the SMX Convention Center, Mall of Asia, at 9 p.m. on Sept. 24.

Aside from the exciting interaction between single ladies and bachelors, the event features 100 special booths. More details at www.100bachelors.com, or call 470-2222.

Movies on TV

On HBO today at 1 p.m., "Deep Blue Sea." Tomorrow at 2 a.m., "The Pelican Brief," Sept. 12 at 7 a.m., "Body Snatchers," Sept. 14 at 1 a.m., "Chameleon," Sept. 15 at 1 a.m., Sept. 15 at 1 p.m., "Acting with the Enemy," Sept. 16 at 11 a.m., "Stowaway," Sept. 17 at 8:30 p.m., "Deadhunters."

On Cinemax today at 6 a.m., "TV 101." Tomorrow at 7:40 a.m., "Chameleon," Sept. 13 at 2:40 a.m., "Panic 13: Panic Situation," Sept. 14 at 4 p.m., "The Sting," Sept. 15 at 8 a.m., "The Jim of the Jackal," Sept. 16 at 8 p.m., "Panic," Sept. 17 at 9:35 p.m., "The Valley of Gwangi."